## *The teaching of media studies : a study in theory and practice.*

Al-Hail, Ali Bin Mohammed Abdulla Jasim

# THE TEACHING OF MEDIA STUDIES: A STUDY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

## VOLUME I


# ALI BIN MOHAMMED ABDULLA JASIM AL-HAIL

**This thesis is submitted to the University of Durham in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.**

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# DECLARATION

**This thesis is the result of my own independent investigation under the supervision of Professor Gerald Grace and Dr. Michael Fleming, except where I have indicated my indebtedness to other sources.**

**I hereby certify that this thesis has not already been accepted in substance for any other degree nor is it being submitted concurrently for any other degree.**

**Signature**

**Signature**

**Signature**

# DEDICATION

**To my beloved children: Abdulla, Talal and Nora, the strategic depth of my life. I see in their eyes the bright future of my homeland, Qatar.**

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# ABSTRACT

**Ali Bin M.A.J. Al-Hail**

## The Teaching of Media Studies:

## a study in theory and practice

**This thesis is concerned, among other things, with suggesting a programme for the teaching of Media Studies in secondary schools in the State of Qatar.**

**These ideas are based on a comparative cultural analysis covering the higher education theorists of Media Studies at two major higher institutions in London, teacher practitioners in British secondary schools in London and Washington, Tyne and Wear, and higher education teachers of Media Studies at the University of Qatar.**

**The main objective of this cultural analysis is to see what can be learned from British experience in teaching Media Studies within both theoretical and practical contexts. The British experience in Media Studies and Media**

**Education is important for researchers. For example, the British Film Institute (BFI) was founded in 1933 and it has continued to be active in cultural research and publication.**

**Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince conducted one of the earliest (1958) studies on the relationship between television violence and the attitudes of British children.**

**Additionally, Media Studies has been taught in the United Kingdom in one form or another since the rise of the Hollywood film industry.**

**This study examines notions of media imperialism and of the moral panics about this which have been generated in both Britain and Qatar. This study argues that it is necessary to look critically at ideas of media imperialism and that it is necessary to go beyond the moral panic approach to media.**

**Therefore one of the central cultural strategies of this thesis has been to find a negotiated cultural relationship between Islamic values transmitted by Islamic and cultural folk media in the State of Qatar, and perceived American media imperialism.**

**In the light of the fieldwork analysis in Britain and in Qatar, an attempt has been made to outline a possible programme of Media Studies and Media Education for Qatar. This is based upon the idea that a negotiated cultural relationship in media is not only possible but necessary.**

**The conclusions are positive and promising. It is argued that there can be an accommodation between American media approaches and those which arise within Qatari Islamic and cultural folk media. That accommodation has been manifested in an interactive relationship between the two cultural codes. It is argued that a negotiated cultural relationship is possible based on the moderate nature and flexible way of life of Islamic beliefs properly understood.**

# INTRODUCTION

**Modern mass media of communication are turning the world into a global village. The powerful agencies of film, television and video penetrate into every society and every culture. American cultural products in particular are a world-wide phenomenon.**

**There are many reactions to this situation. One of them is to use the idea of cultural and media imperialism (especially by the USA) and to relate this imperialism to economic and political imperialism by Western powers.**

**This view tends to result in cultural confrontation and hostility. Another view is to see a process of cultural, aesthetic and moral corruption taking place as a result of the dominance of American media transmission.**

**This view often results in the creation of a moral panic response about the effects of mass media upon the young. Such moral panics have been evident in Britain, in Qatar and even in America itself.**

**Historically, Media Studies developed in a climate of moral panic in the USA and in Britain. Over time however, Media Studies and Media**

**Education have come to have a different orientation and a different approach.**

**Contemporary approaches emphasise critical awareness, critical appreciation and student involvement in media-making. In other words, Media Studies has become a more mature and sophisticated educational and cultural practice, especially in Britain. But can its maturity and its sophistication be simply exported to other societies and other cultures or should there be particular forms of Media Education which are authentic for specific cultures?**

**This study will examine the history, development, theory and present practice of Media Studies in England in order to try to provide an answer to these sorts of questions.**

**In particular, it will try to answer the question 'What sort of Media Studies and Media Education is culturally necessary in the State of Qatar at this time?'**

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# CHAPTER 1

# THE RISE OF MEDIA STUDIES

## 1.1 Historical Background

Before the rise of media studies during the second decade of this century [1] there had been controversy about the impact and influence of the media on the minds of young and old. [2] Hence, in order to develop a coherent understanding of the rise of research into media effects, one is bound to trace the advent and rise of media institutions in the United Kingdom and elsewhere as appropriate in their historic perspective. [3]

The development of media institutions, beginning with the first English newspaper in 1665 [4] up to the age of television and its joint innovations (e.g., Home Video Cassette Recorders (HVCRs) and Sky [5] television at present) paved the way for the rise of concern about looking into media effects. [6] According to Schramm (1960), the English newspapers of the late eighteenth century [7] had a profound influence on Parliament in London by giving people the chance for the

first time in history to know through the newspapers what was going on in the House of Commons. He stated:-

> **"Under the influence of the parliamentary reporters, something like a constitutional change was effected in the character of parliamentary government. As soon as the parliamentary orators discovered that they were addressing not only their fellow-members, but, indirectly, through the medium of the press, the people of England, the whole character of parliamentary proceedings changed. Through the newspapers the whole country was enabled to participate in the discussions by which issues were framed and legislation was enacted" [8] (Schramm, 1960: 15).**

Madison (1964) has argued that newspapers are necessary sources of information for a democracy. Therefore, people must have permanent access to them in order to inform themselves politically. He emphasised:-

**"Knowledge forever governs ignorance. And a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives. A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce, or a tragedy, or perhaps both" (Madison, in Rivers, 1964: 3).**

Whilst the medium of the press was progressing, the medium of popular theatre became important in the mid nineteenth and early twentieth century. [9] Again, this form of media provoked concerns, anxieties and confusion:-

**"One powerful agent of the depraving of the boyish classes of our towns and cities is to be found in the cheap shows and theatres, which are so specially opened and arranged for the attraction and ensnaring of the young .... it is not to be wondered at that the boy who is led to haunt them becomes rapidly corrupted and demoralised, and seeks to be the doer of the infamies which have interested him**

**as a spectator" [10] (quoted in Murdock & McCron, 1979: 51).**

However, it was the rise of cinema in the late nineteenth century and its observed influence, especially on the young, which characterised the history of media research rather than the former forms of media, press and theatre. [11] It was not until 1922, according to Glover (1984) that the earliest study was started by Lashly and Watson [12] which was concerned with the impact of film-watching on young people **(Glover, 1984: 2-3).** [13]

In 1928 a research organisation in New York called "The Payne Fund" responded to public anxieties by beginning research about the impact of Hollywood films on the young in both the United States of America and the United Kingdom. The Payne Fund organisation examined the relationship:-

**".... between film-watching and the attitudes, emotions and behaviour of young people, especially the phenomenon of juvenile crime" (Glover, 1984: 3-6).**

In London, *The Times* illustrated the British overriding concern about the influence of cinema on young students:-

> **"Before these children's greedy eyes with heartless indiscrimination horrors unimaginable are .... presented night after night .... Terrific massacres, horrible catastrophes, motorcar smashes, public hangings, lynching .... All who care for the moral well-being and education of the child will set their faces like flint against this new form of excitement" ('Cinematography and the Child',** ***The Times*****, 2 April 1913, quoted in Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen 1987: 15).**

In the same vein, the American educational authorities were concerned with the influence of films in schools. This feeling resulted in articles such as that written in 1913 significantly entitled 'Making the Devil Useful' **(Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 15).** Educational concerns went even further and resulted in the introduction of courses such as 'Teaching commercial cinema' in the 1930s in order to respond to the panic of the public, especially among parents and teachers, regarding the moral effects of the "Hollywood film industry" on school students

during the 1920s. There was, in particular, alarming concern about featuring sex and drugs in films, which was claimed to have devastating effects on school students.

Unfortunately, these efforts to protect students from Hollywood films by media education had to be called off in 1941 because of the involvement of the United States of America in the Second World War. Alvarado and his colleagues have stated that:-

> **"As the USA became drawn into the Second World War in 1941, the movement to educate students to 'appreciate' what had been designated as 'better' commercial films effectively ground to a halt as the key issues were transformed into questions about the possibilities of instruction through films and not education in film" (Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 15).**

In actual fact the interest of the United States of America in the new medium of cinema then was dominated by the persistence of using the film as an instrument

of propaganda. This, of course, reinforces the fact that political involvement in the early financing and initiating of media research was for the purposes of propaganda. The United States Of America, thus exploited the film industry:-

> **"to discover how effective government propaganda films had been in indoctrinating and training American soldiers to have the 'right attitudes'" [14] (Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 10).**

Despite the fact that American popular culture, Hollywood films, pop music and advertisements etc. flooded the English social environment with a great deal of success, it was faced with vocal counter-attack. A number of scholars in many fields, most notably teaching, made critical responses. Thompson, who wrote a landmark book entitled *Discrimination and Popular Culture*, published in 1965 was influential. Thompson was decisive in his attack on the presumed invasion of American popular culture into the United Kingdom. He argued that every value:-

> **"acquired at school in the way of aesthetic and moral training is contradicted and attacked by the entertainment industry" (Thompson, 1965: 17).**

Thompson, of course, refers to the Hollywood film styles. [15] On the other hand, Hall and Whannel [16] (1964) argued that:-

> **".... in terms of actual quality (and it is with this, rather than with 'effects' that we are principally concerned) the struggle between what is good and worthwhile and what is shoddy and debased is not a struggle against the modern forms of communication, but a conflict within these media. Our concern is with the difficulty which most of us experience in distinguishing the one from the other, particularly when we are dealing with new media, new means of expression, in a new, and often confusing, social and cultural situation" (Hall & Whannel, 1964: 15).**

However, in a later survey on *mass media and the secondary school* in the United Kingdom, Murdock and Phelps (1973) [17] were found in disagreement with Thompson (1965) in particular regarding the bad impact of 'entertainment' [18] on school productivity. There was an agreement between their approach and that of

Hall and Whannel (1964) especially about the potentially useful contribution of mass media (e.g., cinema, pop culture etc.) to school work. Murdock and Phelps argue that adolescents' [19] perception of pop culture [20] is not merely related to such factors as age, sex, class, etc. but also to the way in which these young people appreciate school work and school culture [21] **(Murdock & Phelps, 1973: 118-125).** There have been attempts in the United Kingdom since the early forties to teach students 'film appreciation'. Reed wrote about the necessity to:-

> **"endeavour to raise children's standards of taste and judgement in respect of cinema" (Reed, 1950, in Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 16-18).**

In order to fulfil this aim, Thompson (1965) asserted that:-

> **"raising 'children's standards' involves the building up of a critical response based on an awareness of how film works. And this depends, to begin with, on a willingness to look at films in a much more careful and critical way" (Thompson, 1965: 120).**

He also criticised British education for neglecting film teaching, though it is a sign of 'liberal education'. He argued that:-

> **"It is, in fact, absurd that an art form of such potentiality should still be neglected in liberal education" (Thompson, 1965: 120).**

Hill (1951) seems to be on the same line as both Reed and Thompson. She stated that teaching film in schools:-

> **".... is not so much to discourage children from going to bad films as to encourage them to select better ones and to derive a deeper enjoyment from their film going. In this work the way has been made easier by the marked improvement in quality of films produced today as compared with those made as recently as fifteen years ago. It is too little realised that the film industry has already responded to the demands of a more mature cinema public and that the best way of accelerating this process, while appreciating the advances so far**

**made, is to increase the power of discrimination that still higher standards will be sought" (Hill, 1951: 61).**

As in the case of the cinema, the radio by and large had created its own effect, when it emerged in the first half of the twentieth century marking the wireless [22] age. In his unprecedented survey on psychology of panic, *The Invasion from Mars: a Survey in Psychology of Panic,* Cantril (1940) succinctly summarised the impact radio had upon its audience by reviewing the extraordinary power of Orson Welles' broadcast in 1938 of the radio play 'War of the Worlds' on American college students all over the United States of America:-

**"The girls .... huddled around their radios trembling and weeping in each other's arms. They separated themselves from their friends only to take their turn at the telephone to make long distance calls to their parents saying good-bye for what they thought might be the last time .... Terror stricken girls, hoping to escape from the Mars**

**invaders, rushed to the basement of the dormitory"**

**(Cantril, 1940: 53).**

It is important to review the background of another aspect of radio, which is pop music, for radio is the means of transforming this form of art. [23] It is commonplace to say that pop music had, and still has, a profound influence on young people. Hall and Whannel (1964) writing about the world of pop, that:-

> **"Popular music has an enormous hold on young people at a certain age, involving intense loyalty and identification. Part of its attraction in fact is that it is so much a young person's province and not part of school or the adult world in general. It is emotionally charged and therefore treacherous territory for the teacher, and certainly studies in this area should only be conducted by teachers who can themselves respond to popular music and recognise that it has a validity of its own" (Hall & Whannel, 1964: 410).**

Seven years later Murdock and Phelps (1973) emphasised the significance of teachers with musical skills or taste. They found out that pop media play a key

role in the lives of British adolescents. They, most importantly, found out also that the pop media mean different things and serve different purposes for different groups of young people. To a great extent, personal choices are circumscribed by what the pop media offer. However, they found out that the youngsters do not respond to pop media blindly, but they respond to what they want and what they feel might satisfy their needs **(Murdock & Phelps, 1973: 102-112).**

This last finding reinforces the validity of Hertzog's theory in the 1940s and 1950s about the uses and gratifications of the audience in their perception of the media's output.. Hertzog criticised those theories which implied that an audience is passive. She based her theory on the belief that an audience is selective and actively chooses those aspects of the media which satisfy them.

In every age there has been a medium with special significance. In the middle of this century the era of an even more powerful medium developed - television. Since the advent of television in the United Kingdom the main concern has always been associated with its possible influence on young people, and children in particular. This inspired researchers such as Himmelweit and her associates (1958) to conduct a survey about the impact of television on children. Simply they responded to British parents' and teachers' anxieties about the new arrival of television and sought to determine its effects. In their pioneering research on

*Television and the Child* in the United Kingdom, Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince (1958) found out that the classroom achievements of children with television at home was less than their colleagues who had no access to television (i.e., who did not even "guest view") frequently **(Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince 1958: 5).** [24]

In another significant study, Himmelweit and Swift (1976) found out that working-class men, particularly married ones, viewed more television than their middle-class counterparts. They further found that those who enjoyed reading watched less television and were more selective in their viewing **(Himmelweit & Swift, 1976: 139).**

In their 1985 American study, Johnson and Gross looked at media use by different groups of women. They called these women decision-making and non decision-making. This can be broadly interpreted as professional or managerial salaried women (those who earn fixed monthly salaries) and waged women (those paid on an hourly basis). This second group included housewives. 'Media' were defined by the researchers as books, newspapers, magazines, radio and television. Johnson and Gross found that decision-making women spent less time with the media in general and television in particular. However, they made great use of books, particularly novels, news and trade magazines, and **"serious"** (i.e., not

tabloid) newspapers, with which they spent more time **(Johnson & Gross, 1985: 850-854).**

In the early sixties, the effect of television in the United Kingdom was summed up like this:-

> **"Well, probably there is no causative relationship, but there just might be a triggering effect"** [25] **(Letters to *The Times*, quoted in Halloran, 1963: 11).**

While the latter could be accurate to an extent, Schramm and Donald (1974) suggested some 'causative relationship'. They described two examples of this:-

> **"A 6-year-old boy told a woman in a shop she was a 'bloody silly old moo' because his favourite candy was sold out. They also told a tale about the death of a Leicester boy who died while imitating his masked and cloaked hero 'Batman'" (Schramm & Donald, 1974: 617).**

Winn (1977) argued in her book, *The Plug-in The Drug*, that children's viewing of television is profoundly responsible for their bad behaviour. As a result of this, she recommends that parents use her book to **"help (their) children kick the TV habit" (Winn, 1977, quoted in Root, 1986: 8).** [26] However, other studies carried out in the 1980s suggested that television had been unfairly regarded as a scapegoat for all society's ills. They also point out that many parents tend to use the television as a scapegoat in order to escape their responsibilities. Root (1986), for example, states that:-

> **"Since children are supposed to be innocent, it becomes very useful to blame 'inappropriate' behaviour on some corrupting and devilish influence outside the family. Unsurprisingly, the alien 'box in the corner' [27] comes high on many people's list of bad influences" (Root, 1986: 10).**

## 1.2 Conclusion

**This chapter can be concluded by stating that the rise of media studies began early this century after a long history of a plethora of claims and counter claims about the media's alleged potential for both good and evil - mostly evil.**

**Innovations and developments in media technology and organisation have invariably been accompanied by outbursts of social concern and political controversy. Although it does not necessarily mean that they are groundless, many of the criticisms and anxieties that are expressed about television, Home Video Cassette Recorders (HVCRs) and extended television services (e.g., Sky television) have been expressed in the past about the popular press, theatre, cinema, radio and pop music.**

**The media have had their main social impact in this way, that is, by making us talk about them and by creating moral panics about their effects. It is a truism that the rise of media studies contributed a great deal to concerned people about the role of media in societies. As has been shown throughout this work, the rise of media studies on both sides of the Atlantic has always been fuelled by moral panics over the influence of mass media, particularly over children and televised violence.**

**Writers such as Winn (1977) raised concerns about the effect of television on children in the United Kingdom. In the same fashion, politicians such as Miller (1985) warned families in the United Kingdom that television leads to 'copycat' delinquency. In a recent study by Buckingham (1991) on the myth of moral panics, he stated:-**

> **"One of the main problems with such arguments is that they are typically based on very inadequate evidence, not merely about the scale of the phenomenon but also about its presumed effects. The 'video nastiness' research, for example, signally fails to prove any causal connection between viewing and violent behaviour" (Buckingham, quoted in Lusted, 1991: 14).**

**Root also, plays down the moral panics in the United Kingdom. She opposed (1986) what Miller (1985) said. She argued that if children learn by imitating:-**

> **"Blue Peter would have had more success with its attempt to create 'a young nation of origami adepts, or dog handlers, or builders of lawn-mowers out of**

> coat hangers and wine corks', as novelist Ian McEwan neatly pointed out in the Observer" (Root, 1986: 13).

Root's argument on children's programmes (e.g., Blue Peter) was expressed by Ferguson (1985) in an interesting article titled 'Black Blue Peter'. He also, argued that 'Blue Peter' underestimates the children's intellect (Ferguson, 1985, in Root, 1986: 12). As will be shown in the next chapter Ferguson claimed, in his 1985 article 'Children's Television: the Germination of Ideology' that, programmes which are made for children tend to inhibit their capability of imagination (Ferguson, 1985, in Root, 1986: 12). He also criticised other children's programmes (i.e., Sesame Street) for exploiting the 'presumed' innocence of the children throughout the world (Ferguson, 1981: 52-61), as will be shown in more detail in chapter 5.

Teachers in the United Kingdom were divided throughout the sixties and the seventies in respect of the moral panics which were basically generated by the "Hollywood film industry". For instance, Thompson (1965) was completely opposed to the 'bad influence' of American popular culture which was represented in Hollywood films. Hall, Whannel (1964), Murdock and Phelps (1973) disagreed with Thompson. They argued that British youngsters should

**be motivated by their teachers to select what is worth watching. They admitted that some Hollywood films contribute to students' school work. Therefore, they called on teachers to understand their students' tastes, such as pop music.**

Having reviewed and discussed these early studies, the next chapter will focus on contemporary studies into the claimed 'effects' of the mass media and those studies which examined the introduction of 'Media Studies' as a subject into British secondary schools.

# CHAPTER 2

# THE RISE OF MEDIA STUDIES

## 2.1 Contemporary Studies

In this chapter the main focus will be on two significant developments in the history of media studies, which took place in the eighties. They are: research into the effect of mass media (mostly directed, if not entirely, at television) on social behaviour and a concern about the teaching of mass media in school which will be an important focus for this study. [1]

Almost without exception researchers of the eighties blame the mass media (most especially, television) for the decline in social behaviour, [2] such as 'divorces', 'unmarried parents' [3] **(cf. Howitt, 1982, pp 3-6; McQuail, 1986, pp 240-251; Watson and Hill, 1984, pp 56-63; Glover, 1984, pp 1-4; Hiebert, 1985, px, preface).** In specific detail, Howitt (1982) in his book: *Mass Media and Social Problems*, warns about the power of mass media, particularly television, [4] to convey a frightening picture of both the internal and external world. He claims:-

**"...The mass media are not just changing the outside world but they appear to be undermining our inner world. Divorces are more common, our children are becoming unmarried parents, people are swearing and blaspheming in our living rooms (albeit 'on the box'), people are not going to church any more. We cannot blame ourselves for this; things were not the same in our pre-mass communication days. What further harm can the media inflict on us?" (Howitt, 1982: 4).**[5]

He asserts that the political involvement in funding the research into the effects of mass media on both sides of the Atlantic is to be held responsible for neglecting the fundamental aim of the mass media which is **"entertainment"** [6] He boldly puts it as follows:-

> **"...The main function of the mass media is entertainment but research into the process and effects of mass communication has neglected this. The favoured topics include ways in which**

**information about the state of society is processed and received; ways in which the mass media have had a bad effect on things that happen in society. Harnessing the mass media for the good of society has been a dream, an ideal, which underlies much of the research and argument reported in the rest of this book" [7] (Howitt, 1982: 4).**

It is perhaps relevant to mention that Howitt's views on entertainment will be widely discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7 by the respondents in this research. The concept of "entertainment" will also arise in the discussion of extracts from the press **(for more details see appendix 3).** Whilst Howitt's views about the effects of mass media are critical, McQuail (1986) agrees with Howitt (1982), but not without scepticism. He stresses that there is a degree of uncertainty about media effects. [8] He states that it is:-

**"Not at all easy to name a case where the media can plausibly be regarded as the sole or indispensable cause of a given social effect" (McQuail, 1986: 251).**

Nevertheless, Watson and Hill (1984) define the effects of mass media as:-

**"Any change induced directly or indirectly by the recording, filming or reporting of events" (Watson and Hill, 1984: 63).**

To clarify this definition, it ought to be considered that the analysis of 'effects' or 'impact' (to use another expression) is concerned with a number of correlations. According to them they are:-

**"... modification of attitudes and behaviour of individuals and groups as well as the process of measuring these effects. The subject is immensely complicated as the ground upon which the measurements are taken is constantly shifting" (Watson & Hill, 1984: 63).**

Similarly, Hiebert (1985) seems to hold the same point of view concerning the complexity of measurements. According to him:-

**"The effects of the mass media have to be measured and predicted on a case by case basis, taking into**

**account all the variables in each situation" (Hiebert, 1985: px, preface).**

Furthermore, it is imperative to determine the meaning of effect of television on youth. Schramm and his associates put it like this:-

**"... When something is said about the effect of television on youth, such a statement is really a double-edged statement. That is, something is being said about television and about youth. For example, if a television programme is described as 'interesting', it is being stated that the programme has a certain quality to which certain youth respond in a certain 'engaged' way. In the same way, if a programme is said to be 'frightening' the programme has certain qualities to which a young boy or a child might react in a certain way" (Schramm, Lyle & Parker, 1961: 17).[9]**

They go on to say:-

**"... In a sense, the term 'effect' is misleading because it suggests that television 'does something' to the young" (Schramm, Lyle & Parker, 1961: 17).**

This, as has previously been stated, is what Howitt (1982) strongly believes. However, they seem to put an end to this dilemma by stating that:-

**"The connotation is that television is the actor; the children or viewers in general are acted upon. The youth are thus made to seem relatively inert; television relatively active. The youth are sitting victims; television 'bites' them" (Schramm, Lyle & Parker, 1961: 1-3).**

In opposition to Howitt (1982) are McQuail (1986) and other researchers. Cullingford (1984) for instance concludes his survey on *Children and Television* by saying:-

**"... The statements that children make illuminate particular attitudes to their lives that could be caused by unemployment, depressing living**

**conditions, a lack of hope, little parental concern or education or any number of factors. It is impossible to isolate a medium like television in this cycle of indifference, but it is clear that television is a natural part of it. That there are certain attitudes learned in the act of watching television is as clear as the fact that television, like drink or cigarettes, can be used to alleviate boredom. But to say simply that television causes the indifference is to oversimplify" (Cullingford, 1984: 187).** [10]

He also disagrees with researchers such as Howitt (1982) that television's representation of killing has a nasty effect on children. He found that children as young as five are able to:-

> **"... understand the complexity of moral decisions ... and the meaning of death"** [11] **(Cullingford, 1984: 27).**

However, other researchers, such as Ferguson (1985) found that television viewing of programmes designed especially for young viewers,

**"can inhibit their capacity for thought and intellectual development" (Ferguson, 1985, quoted in Root, 1986: 11).**

This controversy about the role of media in the lives of children and young people has dominated the research into the effects of media over the past seven decades. However, it is the television and Home Video Cassette Recorders (HVCRs) which inspired governments of the world, particularly the United Kingdom and the United States, to use television as a tool of education. This orientation has been highlighted by the foundation of the Open University as well as the establishment of School Broadcasting. In order to shed more light on this point, Cullingford stated (1984) that television's:-

**"... pervasive presence, its ability to combine the moving image with sound, the lavish resources available for the preparation of material and the curiosity with which it has been approached have long made television a symbol of educational opportunity. McLuhan's vision of the 'global village' was one manifestation of the belief in television as a powerful influence on people too far**

**flung ever to gather in schools to hear their teachers. Many countries all over the world have experimented with different types of educational service, using television as the primary mass source for communication. The founding of the Open University as well as the development of School Broadcasting have seen this belief in television clearly manifested" (Cullingford, 1984: 98).**

Having been established, education through television proved to have short-comings. Basically, governments such as those of the United Kingdom and the United States, [12] based their belief on a number of observations and assumptions such as the world-wide spread of television and its popularity among young people in particular could well be a convenient means of education [13] rather than basing their belief on empirical research. To emphasise this very important point in more detail: governments followed blindly four main highly hypothetical and misleading premises. First, of all, the power and effectiveness of television to communicate and inform has for decades been taken for granted. Secondly, its presumed wide-range availability. Thirdly, it has been assumed that television is an adequate replacement for the teacher:-

**"... It has been assumed that television can be a substitute teacher; that it is better to provide a magnificent lecture on the television screen than to provide any number of less erudite or less interesting presence in the classroom" (Cullingford, 1984: 99).**

This assumption has no support, simply for lack of assurances that the supposed students understand the televised lesson. However, television's ability to convey a wide range of facts to a vast number of people remains valid **(Lesser, 1974 quoted in Cullingford, 1984: 99).** Finally, the lavish varieties of resources and revenues it enjoys for making films, drama, soaps, sporting programmes, documentaries and other materials cannot be ignored. All these observations and assumptions have combined together to convince governments of the educational potential of television as an instrument with access to everyone, to use another expression, **"open access"(Cullingford, 1984: 84).** According to Cullingford (1984), television has failed to a large extent to meet these expectations sufficiently. Governmental belief (most notably in the United States of America and the United Kingdom) in the capability of television to educate, teach, and communicate has been based largely on assumptions. Governments have used television as a tool of education without sufficient scientific research. This dependence on assumption

led to what Cullingford (1984) described as disappointment in the possibilities of television [15] as education. He has neatly cited a number of reasons for this disappointment. Firstly, that educational television has been assumed by, both the West and elsewhere, to be a 'substitute teacher'. Secondly,

> **"... that television has been assumed to be an automatic conveyor of information to such an extent that the audience is supposed to view it as a teacher. This view depends on a model of the classroom in which children pay careful attention and, through the application of their minds, remember all that they hear. Even if this were true of the classroom, the contrast with the conditions of viewing in the home is very clear" (Cullingford, 1984: 99).**

Nevertheless, Howitt (1982) concludes 'Education by the Mass Media' by arguing that:-

> **"It is easy to point to the lack of public awareness of information which has been disseminated through the mass media as evidence of the ineffectiveness of**

**the media as a means of educating and informing the public. At the same time this tends to assume that human learning is a much more simple process than in fact it is. Human minds do not soak up every scrap of information offered to them. Apart from books, for example, none of the mass media are suitable as reference sources to be used when the need arises. The newspapers, magazines, radio, and television provide information when they schedule it, not when the audience necessarily needs it ... The mass media, unlike the education system, could not be geared to individual learning needs using present technologies" (Howitt, 1982: 155-156).**

In the light of these statements it could be argued that a traditional lesson at a classroom in a school is more beneficial to a group of students than television sets and video machines in almost every household. [14] The educative potential of television appears to be high (e.g., the power of television to combine sound with vision in colourful imagery and the capability of the television to attract attention). These arguments will also be highlighted by the respondents in this work **(see chapters 5, 6 and 7).**

This debate on the role of the mass media, particularly television, in education leads to the other crucial development in the history of media studies which emerged in the mid eighties: the effect of education on mass media; in other words, teaching the media. Referring to an earlier period of 'panic' about the media, Alvarado quotes Rogers (1980):-

> **"There is only one thing that can kill the movies, and that is education" (Rogers, 1980, in Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 1).**

The implication of Rogers' 1980 statement is that education about the media can help young people to be critical and selective, rather than letting their minds absorb what they perceive on television in a passive manner. These implications and others have been the primary motivating forces behind the introduction of teaching the mass media in a critically appreciative way in England and Wales' schools during the late 1980s. In fact the early history of media studies was an attempt to understand media impact on the education of children and youth **(see chapter 1).** [16]

It was not until the mid eighties that the history of Media Studies entered a new critical era. One of the most influential pioneers of this new field is Masterman.

In the following pages, the school of thought associated with his work will be reviewed. Other researchers who wrote about this field following Masterman's steps, such as Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, will also be looked at.

There have over the past seven years or so been two main assertions of great significance which provide an answer to the frequently posed question: why teach the mass media? The first is concerned with the fact that children spend long hours in daily perception of media, mostly television, comics, video and pop music. To explain this fact further, Buckingham (1991) states that:-

> **"Statistics on television viewing, for example, suggest that children today spend more time watching television than they spend in school. If we add to this the amount of time spent watching films, reading comics and magazines, and listening to records, we arrive at figures which typically provoke a mixture of surprise and horror, particularly among teachers, who are likely to feel that their students' time would be far better spent on activities they themselves consider more edifying" (Buckingham, 1991, in Lusted: 12).**

Moreover, according to Willis (1990) 98% of the population in the United Kingdom watch television an average of 25 hours a week, 92% of 20-24 year old listen to the radio, 87% of 20-24 year old listen to records and tapes. 40% of 16-24 year old go to the cinema at least once in three months **(Willis, 1990: recent statistics).**

The second assertion arises from the first one. If the media have this potential popularity among children, teachers must not fail to recognise this popularity, diagnose it and attempt to tackle it in order to use it productively. Furthermore, these two-fold assertions seem to be unquestionably very important for education.

As a result of all of these considerations, Masterman (1985) produced a strong case for introducing critical Media Studies in schools. He gave seven reasons for the necessity of giving the teaching of the media at secondary level schools **"most urgent priority":-**

> **"The high rate of media consumption and the saturation of contemporary societies by the media.**
>
> **The ideological importance of the media, and their influence as "consciousness industries".**

**The growth in the management and manufacture of information, and its dissemination by the media.**

**The increasing penetration of media into our central democratic processes.**

**The increasing importance of visual communication and information in all areas.**

**The importance of educating students to meet the demands of the future.**

**The fast-growing national and international pressures to privatise information" (Masterman, 1985: 13).**

It is important to develop Masterman's seven reasons in more detail. He begins with assertions about the high rate of media consumption and the saturation of contemporary societies by the media. According to him, the average British adult spends 75 hours every week with television, radio, newspapers and magazines. This exposure to media interaction makes Masterman suggest that most of society

is being saturated by the media, and education about media ought to be taken seriously.

Masterman raises concerns about the role of media in ideologically shaping people's minds about their internal and external world. In his view the issue is not merely the time people spend with the media, but what media do to people in terms of **"ideological consciousness".** Masterman believes that almost every country manipulates the media as a tool of propaganda. In the same fashion producers of food, for instance, use the media to persuade clients to buy their products. This aspect of manipulation of media, among others, should be examined by the youth.

The increasing penetration of media into our central democratic processes requires an awareness in youth of techniques of persuasion in political broadcasts. These issues and others require good understanding by students to enhance the process of participating and informed democracy.

The second half of this century has witnessed a revolution in information and communication such as computers, fax machines, global television, etc. This seems to require that students should be educated in how to use these techniques to improve their skills in communications media. Masterman claims that the cultural

and political changes made by the media had been given little attention in British schools over the past 20 years. He complains:-

> **"At present our schools largely continue to produce pupils who are likely to carry with them for the rest of their lives either a quite unwarranted faith in the integrity of media images and representations, or an equally dangerous, undifferentiated scepticism which sees the media as sources of all evil" (Masterman, 1985: 14 ).**

Masterman also examines the fast-growing national and international pressures to privatise information. He gives examples of pressures on the BBC to start advertising and other examples such as selling British Telecom etc. He warns against privatisation of information. He advises his fellow-teachers to be on their guard about these developments **(Masterman, 1985: 2).** Masterman points out that communication systems and information flows become increasingly central components of social, economic and political activity at all levels and yet media education remains marginal within educational systems everywhere. The media themselves are constantly changing, expanding and developing, frequently in the

direction of an increasingly sophisticated management of their audiences, but sometimes in ways which open out more democratic possibilities. Therefore:-

> **"Education needs to be equally flexible and open to change" (Masterman, 1985: 1).**

He develops this by pointing out that:-

> **"If education is to have any credibility at all, then media education must move from the periphery of the curriculum towards its centre. This movement will, moreover, be paralleled within each subject. For, as more and more information is transmitted via electronic media in every discipline, problems of interpreting this material will attain the kind of significance that reading now has at all curriculum levels" (Masterman, 1983, in Lusted, 1991: 171).**

However, it is important to note that Masterman's first book (1980) *Teaching About Television* opposed the direct teaching of media studies to secondary level students. He stressed:-

**"The major problem lies in the distinct differences which are likely to exist between what is considered important and interesting by a teacher, and what is of interest to his pupils. Like most articulate people who do not possess much of it, teachers and lecturers tend to be fascinated and even preoccupied with questions of power and control. It is not, by and large, a preoccupation which is likely to be shared by many of their pupils. And even assuming that pupils are able to see its significance, there is a genuine difficulty in relating questions of organisational structures or patterns of control to the direct experience of the pupil" (Masterman, 1980: 5).**

However, he completely modified his views throughout his second study of 1985, *Teaching the Media.* He specified a full chapter offering advice to teachers or rather suggesting guide lines for them while teaching in the classroom. He stated his modified views in 1985 by exploring three significant reasons why media teachers should encourage the development of media education and media literacy skills in the teaching of all subjects. Given the fact that media materials

such as films have always been used by teachers of all subjects, to help them get the message through to their students, Masterman calls on media teachers to intervene. The reason is that those materials have been used as **"transparent"** carriers of information. He argues that media teachers should do so to protect the effectiveness of their own teaching. Simply media materials, he asserts, should not be **"consumed"** innocently. They rather should be studied critically. Masterman attributes all this to this conviction:-

> **"The basic media literacy technique of relating media messages to the political, social and economic interests of those who are producing them, needs to be encouraged as a matter of course by teachers of all subjects" (Masterman, 1985: 242).**

Masterman warns media teachers that they must bear in mind that students who attend their classes do not do so with a blank mind about media, for they are surrounded by media outside school and familiar with media through other subjects. These considerations certainly lead to more effective teaching. He recommends media teachers to relate their subject to other subjects on the curriculum. For the subject teacher, the use of the mass media can make the subject more engaging and tangible in addition to providing opportunities to

expand possibilities of interpretations with the subjects **(Masterman, 1985: 242-243).** Masterman (1985) argues forcibly that media education:-

> **"... is one of the few instruments which teachers and students possess for beginning to challenge the great inequalities in knowledge and power which exist between those who manufacture information in their own interests and those who consume it innocently as news and entertainment" (Masterman, 1985: 24).**

Masterman cites a number of subjects in which media education can play a big role in teaching them effectively. Geography is one example cited. Since Geography is concerned among other things with environment and landscapes, visual image as one aspect of media literacy can help a lot in comprehending the subject. Masterman reviews the efforts of Jenkins and Young at Oxford Polytechnic as an important instance of taking advantage of media literacy in geographical courses. Their work demonstrates the connection between what Masterman describes as visual literacy and the **"natural environment".** The significance of using media literacy in Science at school is highlighted by the following as Masterman believes that this passage expresses it well:-

**"...I have taken three sciences to 'O' level (i.e., 16 years old) and at no time have the workings of the car, radio, television, vacuum cleaner, tape recorder or fridge ever been explained to me ... Nor, during any of my science lessons, have I heard anything about the moon landings or the exploration of the universe. The food crisis, the population explosion and the complete field of agriculture have all gone completely unmentioned ... The great success of the TV science documentaries and the increasing membership of many amateur scientific societies suggests an opposite trend to that seen in the school laboratory. It's not unusual to find kids discussing with animation last night's 'Horizon' during school break and then disrupting their physics lesson with equal enthusiasm" (Extract from an essay by a British schoolboy, quoted in Masterman, 1985: 251).**

Masterman argues that although English teachers have for the past fifty years been interested in media they were aware of media's threat to English language.

However, among other roles they can still play a crucial role in analysing media content with their students. Masterman believes that teachers of History can use the media to their interest, for the media carries historical events which should be explained to their students **(Masterman, 1985: 257).** Undoubtedly, all these perspectives about media and children developed an increasing concern about teaching the media in schools. For instance, when the National Media Conference (NMC) took place at Bradford in 1985, this is what one of the respondents had to say in his address to the gathering:-

> **"Alongside the need to provide high quality material and a crucial base against which to judge it, broadcasters must engage actively with educators and others in the debate about television and radio and their role in society, providing accurate and comprehensive information on all aspects of the subject from the standpoint of the practitioners. They may do this through writing, through speaking, by discussing, and through encouraging research, but if they do not do these things then they leave the field wide open to tendentious and ideological simplistic arguments which are bad**

**scholarship and a disservice to real education"**

**(quoted in Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 13).**

Furthermore, Alvarado and his associates (1987) stated in their book, *Learning about the Media,* that since media, most notably television at the present time, have become an inevitable fact of everyday life with varying degrees, especially among young people, the demand for co-operation between educators and media institutions is now more urgent than it has ever been in the past. Therefore, their prime [17] concern throughout their book is that learning about media in secondary schools enables the youngsters to recognise: how the media function, how they form a significant part of our **"cultural capital",** and realise that the media incessantly constitute fundamental topics on the political agenda. They also insist that it is important to:-

> **"Know and learn about the complex of elements - economic, technological, institutional, legal, political, cultural, aesthetic - which constitute the production processes of films and television programmes and also to understand how such cultural artefacts produce meaning, how people and issues are represented and how audiences are**

**constructed and constituted" (Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 2).**

Alvarado and his associates argue that the introduction of teaching mass media in secondary schools is an educational necessity. This necessity derives from the fact that:-

**"... the media are everywhere in our society. No longer constrained by geographical boundaries, technological limitations or the scarcity of radio frequencies, the new delivery systems of satellite, cable and video allow the universal, and virtually instantaneous, distribution of television and film productions. The only potential barriers left are those of state regulation, and even then it is unclear how they are going to stop (should they wish to) the bombardment from above (satellites) or from below (video piracy and smuggling)" (Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 1).**

As a result of all this, education world-wide and education in the United Kingdom ought to (if not must) respond to this unprecedented flow of the modern mass media. They neatly conclude this argument by stating that:-

> **"Learning the media has become part of our daily lives. The media are not only now part of the educational curriculum, they are also part of the social and political curriculum" (Alvarado, Gutch. and Wollen, 1987: 38).**

As for teaching an understanding of the institutions such as television, Alvarado and his associates seem to be in agreement with Masterman (1980). For instance, they argue that:-

> **"... teaching a narrative analysis of 'The Sweeney' is always going to be a more tempting proposition than teaching the BBC Charter or ownership structures" (Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 46).**

They praise Masterman's modified views of 1985 about teaching **"institutions"** as a skill. An example of this could be raising the students' awareness by relating

a media message such as a poll tax demonstration to its surroundings: political, economic and social factors. Hence, they learn that mass media do not work in isolation. Alvarado and his colleagues assert that **"media institutions"** ought to be part of teaching the mass media in secondary schools, especially from an historical background. They devote their effort on this particular point to television. They justify this emphasis as follows:-

> **"... The media institutions on which we shall concentrate our attention here will be those of broadcast television. Theoretical orthodoxy has deliberated upon cinema as institution. Those deliberations are still pertinent, but most students watch the television rather than the cinema screen"**
>
> **(Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 47).**

As for their main assertion about teaching the historical background of media institutions such as television, they stress the vitally important educational value of their assertion, because:-

> **"... Media organisations are, of course, essentially cultural institutions and therefore need to be**

**analysed and taught about in such terms. This, in turn, entails a need to introduce the concept of the state and the nature of a state's relationship to a culture and its cultural workers" (Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 4).**

Alvarado and his associates support their assertion (1987) by a quotation from Hall's essay 'The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media'. He points out:-

> **"Of course, the British state has assumed wide responsibilities for the conditions of culture in a broader sense. Especially through its education systems, it assumes responsibility for the definition and transmission of cultural traditions and values, for the organisation of knowledge, for the distribution of what the French sociologist, [18] Pierre Bourdieu, calls 'cultural capital', throughout the different classes; and for the formation and qualification of intellectual strata - the guardians of cultural tradition. The state has become an active**

**force in cultural reproduction" (Hall, 1981, in Bridges: 33. See also chapter 7 for more discussion of Hall's views in regard to this particular point).**

Furthermore, they explore their assertion about the imperative to teach media institutions in a very interesting comparison between films (and cinema) on the one hand and television on the other. They argue:-

**"... We would suggest that the state views films (and cinema) as being essentially cultural institutions, while it views the television institutions as being essentially political. What is meant by this latter assertion is not only that television is not viewed as being cultural (because, to a large extent, it is not concerned with the dominant culture of high art) but also it is its political significance that is the major concern of the state" (Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 47).**

In a strong attack, Alvarado and his colleagues (1987) highly criticise the Government of the United Kingdom for undermining the cultural significance of

cinema, unlike other European states such as, France and Germany, whilst it places too much emphasis on the role of television as a political tool. They decisively and angrily put it:-

**"... Thus, in Britain, the state plays a very clear role in relation to television and broadcasting [19] in general, but relatively little when it comes to the cinema. For example, the British state plays a far less extensive role in cultural matters than is the case in other European cultures. Britain has no Ministries of Culture and keeps no cultural statistics like other *UNESCO* member states to indicate 'cultural development'. All Britain formally possesses is the Department of Education and Science and the Arts Council, which, though financed by the state, has its policies defined by 'independent' committees. Thus the role of the state -outside the relatively small-scale funding of the British Film Institute - in relation to film has been ambiguous and shifting. On the other hand, the role of the state in relation to television has always been**

**clear and powerful. Thus a cultural history of television (or, more usefully, of broadcasting) instead of privileging the usual technologically defined dates, would instead examine the cultural partnership between the state and the BBC and the political control of independent television"**

**(Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 48).**

Nevertheless, teaching about media institutions is a skill in Masterman's argument (1985) as well as the cultural histories of their establishments as in Alvarado and his associates' views.

In a different approach to media education in the United Kingdom, Buckingham (1990) claims that the practical aspect of media education has, for years, been neglected by preoccupation with the theoretical dimensions of the field. His focus is concerned with the latter : classroom practice in media education. Buckingham begins by addressing a number of **'fundamental questions'** every teacher ought to address before embarking on introducing media education to his/her students. First of all:-

**"... What do our students already know about the media? How does the knowledge we attempt to**

**provide connect with this? How do students learn about the media, and what are the most effective teaching strategies? To what extent is the body of academic knowledge we offer either useful or meaningful to students? These are the kinds of questions which are inevitably raised by classroom practice" (Buckingham, 1990: 3).**

While he asserts these **"fundamental questions"** as the cornerstone for the practical education of mass media at the classroom level, he criticises the obsession of media education writers such as Masterman with sheer theorisation, with the result that practice at the classroom level has most often been neglected. As a result of this negligence,

**"... media education in schools has remained very much the poor relation: while academics have theorised away, practising teachers have effectively been excluded from the debate" (Buckingham), 1990: 4).**

This rivalry between theory and practice in the interdisciplinary study of media education has hampered the efforts to envisage media education across the

curriculum since the rise of media education during the seventies. Buckingham blames the rivalry on 'screen theory' which has been the product of the rise of media education in the seventies. He argues:-

> **"While the development of 'screen theory' in the 1970s was largely the province of academics, it also had significant educational implications. Perhaps the most fundamental of these was simply the privileging of theory itself" (Buckingham, 1990: 3).**

Buckingham explores this "privilege" further by criticising not merely the 'academics' of the 1970s, but also and primarily the politicians of the 1970s for their interventions to politicise the theory. He continues:-

> **"Following Althusser, a central emphasis was placed on the political role of theory: the only true scientific knowledge was to be gained through the development of a theory of 'ideology-in-general' - any study of specific ideologies, histories, or social formations was**

**rejected as mere empiricism" (Buckingham, 1990: 4).**

Buckingham also criticises the 'Screen Journal' which simultaneously emerged with the 'screen theory' during the seventies by the Society for Education in Film and Television (SEFT). He holds the Journal directly responsible for neglecting the issues of the mass media. He states in his strong critical attack:-

**"While there was certainly detailed empirical work on film texts published in 'Screen' during this period, it is nevertheless remarkable how little there was, and how much of it was confined to a limited canon of 'approved' texts. There was very little work on television, or on media industries, and almost none on audiences. Empirical work of this kind was forced to take a back seat in favour of extremely generalised theories of film as an ideological or psychic 'apparatus'"**

**(Buckingham, 1990: 4).**

Buckingham unveils the role of 'Screen' during the seventies to reinforce the status quo by neglecting again the causes of the Labour movement. He states:-

> **"...At a time when major political battles were being fought between the Labour movement and the state, 'Screen' was busily developing a theory which proclaimed the almost total power of state apparatuses to determine consciousness and social action. This theory which emerged in the mid 1970s came to be known as 'The Psychoanalytic Theory'. It assumed that 'the individual subject was seen as hopelessly bound into a monolithic patriarchal "symbolic order", from which there was little hope of escape'. 'The Psychoanalytic Theory' saw the mass media as the 'prime agent' to serve the purposes of its assumptions" (Buckingham, 1990: 4).**

The theory employed two particular aspects of the mass media: 'narrative' and 'realism'. According to Buckingham:-

**"the theory seemed to have a 'little point in distinguishing between different forms of realism or narrative - all were equally tainted with the (dominant ideology)" (Buckingham, 1990: 4).**

Buckingham once more criticises the theory for embodying:-

> **"... a pedagogy - a set of implied relationships between teachers and learners" (Buckingham, 1990: 5).**

In addition to this criticism he also describes the revelations of the theory as **"arrogance".** This **"arrogance"** manifested its beliefs in that the audiences of the mass media have 'predominantly' been manipulated by the mass media, whilst school teachers were believed to be exposers of the **"dominant ideology".** Thus, the theoretical build-up of the development of media education and its rival debates during the seventies do not seem to work in the practical sense of tackling media education in schools. However, in the 1980s media education entered into a new era of positive developments. Perhaps one of the most fundamental developments was the withering away of the **'monolithic'** approach adopted by the 'screen theory' in the 1970s. This led to a dramatic change towards the function of

the mass media within society. Instead of believing in the notion that the mass media can only be seen as a tool for manipulating the audiences in order to reinforce and preserve the 'dominant ideology, the 1980s notion of the mass media has been based on 'diversity and contradiction'. The mass media, in other words, are not seen merely as instruments which serve the purposes of the ruling classes and reinforce the existing status quo. They are seen also as a means which the majority of audiences engage in co-operative activity. All these developments, have successfully culminated in the necessity of adding media education as a part of the English curriculum. This was strengthened by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) recognition of media education in some secondary schools in the United Kingdom. However, as Buckingham concludes:-

**"While these developments are broadly positive, it remains the case that there has been very little analysis or evaluation of what is taking place in practice. As media education expands, it is vitally important that there is a continuing debate about its aims and purposes, and that this debate is informed by a detailed consideration of classroom practice"**

**(Buckingham, 1990: 12).**

As will be shown in chapters 5, 6 & 7 the respondents have also criticised the screen theory.

Yet if media education is concerned, among other major virtues, with the importance of 'common culture', one ought to remember Williams [20] (1958) argues the following consideration:-

> **"We need a common culture, not for the sake of an abstraction, but because we shall not survive without it"(Williams, 'Culture and Society', 1958 in Bazalgette, 1991: 3).**

In her book, *Media Education*, Bazalgette (1991) approaches media education from a different but interesting angle. She, unlike previous writers, does not tackle media education from a theoretical point of view. Nor, indeed, does she look at it from its practical perspective. Bazalgette looks at the importance of media education right at the heart of the National Curriculum, in its cultural perspectives. Her view is based on the fact that the mass media are not strange arrivals in the National Curriculum. Nor are they:-

**"... a separate bit of the curriculum, or indeed as something that has to be 'shoehorned' into a traditional subject, such as English" (Bazalgette, 1991: 3).**

She goes on in full agreement with other writers in the field such as Masterman, Alvarado and his colleagues and Buckingham, in particular about the fact that the different varieties of the media of mass communications such as television, video, cable and satellite are a daily active reality, shaping, formulating and changing people either directly or indirectly. In her words:-

**"...The media are not a separate part of our experience, as can be demonstrated whenever you ask anyone to define the term. (Try it with several people, and see whether you get the same list each time, they are inextricably bound up with the whole complex web of ways in which we share understandings about the world, a web which includes gestures, jokes and hairstyles as well as news bulletins, opera and architecture, books as well as television)" (Bazalgette, 1991: 3).**

Hence, Bazalgette says, they **"... use the term 'culture' to cover all this" (Bazalgette, 1991: 3).** By praising the introduction of mass media to the National Curriculum she asserts that this 'radical' step is initially essential, most notably towards teaching 'culture' in schools, since the mass media are one of the most fundamental components of popular culture. This significant development, in her main argument, will hopefully, lead to formulating:-

> **"... a conceptual framework that will enable children to learn, enjoyably and purposefully, about any and every aspect of their current, and potential, cultural experience" (Bazalgette, 1991: 3).**

Bazalgette defines the word 'culture' in terms of a number of categories(e.g., individual culture), which is based in her view on what an individual knows about if he / she is **"cultured".** As a result of all this, she expresses her feelings towards the latest developments in British educational systems throughout Scotland and Northern Ireland which have now, according to her:-

> **"optional elements of media education in secondary schools, and England and Wales have a statutory requirement to study the media from Key Stage 2**

**onwards in the National Curriculum Statements of Attainment and Programmes of Study for English" (Bazalgette, 1991: 7).**

It is, of course, highly important to maintain these significant developments, together with consistent attempts to further develop them in order to normalise media in schools. Bazalgette concludes by arguing that:-

**"...Public debate about the media in Britain is still abysmally simplistic. Agitation from the world's tackiest popular press about the world's most respected public service broadcasting system still gets taken seriously. Media monopolies and Western cultural imperialism are ignored. Vast public subsidy of high art continues while children's television stands on the brink of extinction. The idea of burning books can still invoke heartfelt moral condemnation, but the failure to nurture and protect other media is to my mind the equivalent of a literary holocaust. Media education is often seen as a way of defending children from television. It ought**

to be seen as a way of giving them high expectations of television, of all media, and of themselves" (Bazalgette, 1991: 58).

## 2.2 Conclusion

This chapter could be concluded by stating that the era of the eighties passed through dramatic change in the development of mass media research and literature in general. The first development has been the focus on social problems on both sides of the Atlantic, especially the role of mass media, good or bad, positive or passive. As has already been discussed, Howitt (1982) and McQuil (1986) for instance, associated the media with among other issues - the decline in standards of social behaviour, in particular the crimes of rape and theft.

In addition to this, political involvement has played a role in initiating, funding, and to a certain extent, directing mass media research throughout the history of mass media, since the rise of research into the impact of cinema in the United States of America on youth during the 1920s. It is, nevertheless, important to indicate that political involvement has sustained its dominance during the 1970s and 1980s in varying degrees. In the United Kingdom, for

example, the political factor played a great role in hindering the introduction of mass media into British schools.

The second development in the history of mass media research has been characterised by the rise of media education in the United Kingdom in particular. During this period, which continued throughout the past two decades, two trends were dominant. The first has been the theoretical debates on media education, marked by political involvement in media education, which aimed to manipulate the mass media to serve the ruling classes. In this period the media was mainly seen as a tool of manipulation. The second era emerged in the 1980s with a new approach to the mass media. This new approach has been established as looking at the media in terms of diversity and contradiction, in which the audiences play an active and co-operative role. It has also been established through introducing media studies within the language curriculum in some British secondary schools (this will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3).

This chapter has explored the contributions of pioneers of the interdisciplinary approach, such as Masterman, who wrote two main books in the field. The first was *Teaching About Television* (1980) in which he was opposed to teaching "the institutions" in secondary level schools in the United

**Kingdom. However, in 1985 he wrote another valuable book, *Teaching about the Media*, in which he modified most of his views. For instance, in 1985 he advised teachers to teach students at secondary level "institutions" as a skill, not as a historical study. The works of Alvarado and his associates (1987), Buckingham (1990) and Bazalgette (1991) have also been discussed. Alvarado and his associates suggested mainly, among other issues (1987), the importance of teaching students at secondary level schools the historical and cultural background of the establishments of British media institutions such as the BBC; while Buckingham (1990) is concerned with the practice of media education in the classroom rather than its theories. He mainly criticised the theorists such as Masterman(1980 & 1985), Alvarado and his associates (1987) for neglecting practical media education. They also criticised political influence upon media education in the United Kingdom.**

**Finally, Bazalgette (1991) tackled the issue from a rather different but interesting perspective. She used the word 'culture' to cover all the issues pertinent to media education. In her conclusion, she neatly and boldly warned about a "literary holocaust", stressing the importance of media education in British secondary schools.**

**In the next chapter, the relationship between English, Literature and Media Studies in the context of British secondary schools and the National Curriculum will be discussed.**

# CHAPTER 3

# ENGLISH, MEDIA STUDIES AND THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

## 3.1 The relationship between English and Media Studies

### 3.1.1 Introduction

The controversy associated with the place of Media Studies within the National Curriculum in England and Wales prompted by the reforms of the 1980s echoes the concerns of some of the educational pioneers of the 1920s (in particular Richards) and the 1930s (Leavis) [1] **(Stables, 1992: 16; Abbs, 1982: 12; Bazalgette, 1992: vii).** [2] This chapter, thus, is mainly concerned with the relationship and its developments since the 1920s between English and Media Studies.

## 3.1.2 Background

With the rise of American Hollywood films during the 1920s and subsequently their increased popularity in the United Kingdom, the concern among educationists, most notably Leavis and Thompson [3] gave rise to a focus on Media Studies (**Leavis & Thompson, 1934: 1-8).** The relationship between English and Media Studies [4] started with the latter becoming a part of the English curriculum. However, according to a recent study by Stables (1992) English and Media Studies:-

**".... were seen as diametrically opposed to each other" (Stables, 1992: 6).**

This opposition was based on the belief that English as literature, in his view:-

**".... is considered to have the finest academic credentials" (Stables, 1992: 6),**

as opposed to the claims of media. Stables states that this school of thought owes a great deal:-

**"... to the Cambridge School led by F.R. Leavis and I.A. Richards [5] in the 1920s and 1930s" (Stables, 1992: 6).**

In this section of this work the central arguments of both Richards (1924) and Leavis (1933 & 1952) will be discussed, particularly those of Richards (1924) whose book *Principles of Literary Criticism* [6] has been widely considered by later researchers **(e.g., Stables, 1992; Abbs, 1982 etc.)** as being a cornerstone in examining English and Media Studies since the early 1920s. He started his arguments by addressing what he described as **".... the fundamental questions...." (Richards, 1924: 6).**

**"What gives the experience of reading a certain poem its value? How is this experience better than another? Why prefer this picture to that? In which ways should we listen to music so as to receive the most valuable moments? Why is one opinion about works of art not as good as another?...." (Richards, 1924: 5-6).**

Richards also addressed what he called **'preliminary questions'** which are not less important than **'the fundamental questions'.** They are:-

> **".... What *is* a picture, a poem, a piece of music? How can experiences be compared? What is a value?" (Richards, 1924: 6).**

He asserted that 'criticism' of literature both old such as Shakespeare's plays or new such as cinema and radio then **".... is required to answer...." those 'fundamental' and 'preliminary' questions" (Richards, 1924: 6).** Richards (1924) defined 'criticism' in an interesting fashion. He stated:-

> **".. Criticism as I understand it, is the endeavour [7] to discriminate between experiences and to evaluate them. We cannot do this without some understanding of the nature of experience, or without theories of valuation and communication" (Richards, 1924: 2).**

The author of this work found this definition very interesting because it reflects current concerns. Richards, as an educationist, apparently referred to the transitional era, then, between the old forms of media such as books and new media such as cinema and radio. A theme of Richards' writing was the importance of making judgements about art and works of art. Seven decades ago he had to say this to his fellow educationists:-

> **"What shall we do with the powers which we are so rapidly developing, and what will happen to us if we cannot learn to guide them in time?" (Richards, 1924: 4).**

Richards apparently referred to the power of both mass media, classic and modern. For instance, Hitler in Nazi Germany used the power of the mass media as a tool of propaganda from 1933 until his fall in 1945. As a result of what was witnessed as the withering away of 'powers' of literature from the old media such as books to the new media such as cinema and radio during the 1920s, Richards was mostly concerned with maintaining the aesthetic standards of British society. He had written:-

"…. With the increase of population the problem presented by the gulf between what is preferred by the majority and what is accepted as excellent by the most qualified opinion has become infinitely more serious and appears likely to become threatening in the near future. For many reasons standards are much more in need of defence than they used to be. It is perhaps premature to envisage a collapse of values, a transvaluation by which popular taste replaces trained discrimination. Yet commercialism has done stranger things: we have not yet fathomed the more sinister potentialities of the cinema and the loud-speaker, and there is some evidence, uncertain and slight no doubt, that such things as 'best-sellers' (compare Tarzan with She), magazine verses, mantelpiece pottery, Academy pictures, music hall songs, County Council buildings, war memorials, are decreasing in merit" (Richards, 1924: 36). [8]

Again Richards sounded very concerned about the threat of new media to **"aesthetic standards".** Richards' views about literature and standards have three quarters of a century later been shared by some recent studies such as that of Stables (1992) on literature and Media Studies. Stables states that Richards (1924) and Leavis (1933 & 1952):-

> **".... more than anybody else justified the study of literature as both academically rigorous and central to our lives as feeling human beings" (Stables, 1992: 16).**

Plauding Richards' efforts of concern about the 'personal' aesthetic standards of the people, particularly the vitality of analysing these aesthetic standards and subsequently developing them, Stables (1992), and Abbs (1982) also take on board Richards' belief that the latter constitutes study about literature. Stables (1992) particularly confirms:-

> **".... Richards was concerned that personal, aesthetic response be analysed and developed. We now take for granted that, to a large extent, this is what literary study is about ...." (Stables, 1992: 17).**

Although Stables and his fellow-educationists of these days share some of Richards' views of the 1920s, particularly the view that **".... the study of English literature really is important" (Stables, 1992: 7),** they are less inclined to agree with some of his other assertions.

In 1924 Richards wrote:-

> **".... So loath have they [some teachers of his time] been to be thought at large with the wild asses that they have virtually shut themselves up in a paddock. If the competent are to refrain because of the antics of the unqualified, an evil and a loss which are neither temporary nor trivial increase continually. It is as though medical men were all to retire because of the impudence of quacks...." (Richards, 1924: 35).**

He concluded by stating:-

> **"... For the critic is as closely occupied with the health of the mind as the doctor with the health of the body" [9] (Richards, 1924: 35).**

Richards also focused on the notion of the arts. He asserted:-

> **"....the arts are our storehouse of recorded values. They spring from and perpetuate hours in the lives of exceptional people, when their control and command of experience is at its highest, hours when the varying possibilities of existence are most clearly seen and the different activities which may arise are most exquisitely reconciled, hours when habitual narrowness of interests or confused bewilderment are replaced by an intricately wrought composure" (Richards, 1924: 32).**

However, educationists such as Stables (1992), Abbs (1982) and others, whilst highlighting Richards' assertion regarding the value of the art, are less inclined to agree with his view that the superior value of one particular work can be judged

objectively, for the twentieth century has been the beginning of the popular culture, notably the mass media, which subsequently led to mass culture. This clearly demonstrates the struggle between classic and modern every where.

Richards (1924) was a firm believer throughout his book *Principles of Literary Criticism* in three main principles: art, culture and tradition. His colleague Leavis (1933), the other pioneer of the Cambridge School, also remained loyal to those principles.

In his essay (1952) 'Literature and Society' he attacked Marxist theories of defining literature as mass production neglecting therefore the individual creativity. Leavis asserted:-

> **".... you cannot be interested in literature and forget that the creative individual is indispensable" (Leavis, 1952: 185).**

Simply, as Leavis further explained his over-riding concern about literature:-

> **".... the 'literature' in question is something in the definition of which value judgements figure**

**essentially, and something accessible only to the reader of intelligent and sensitive criticism" (Leavis, 1952: 193).**

Thus, both scholars of the Cambridge School, Richards (1924) and Leavis(1933, 1952) in particular have always been in explicit rivalry with the Marxist notion of literature as mass production. Having said all that about the pioneers of the Cambridge School, Stables (1992) interprets their approach by saying:-

**"....It can be urged that Leavis' and Richards' belief in culture and art to an extent depended upon their rejection of the forces they saw as antagonistic to culture and art"(Stables, 1992: 17).**

In actual fact Leavis particularly manifested this **"rejection of the forces"** as early as 1933, in his well-known essay titled 'Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture'. He reinforced his conviction of the notion that the culture of the nation must be protected by the intellectuals. In Leavis' view (1933), on their efforts **"....depend the implicit standards that order the finer living of an age" (Leavis, 1933: 17).** Leavis in this particular essay called on the elite to protect

the culture.[10] Furthermore, Leavis disclosed the case of culture in the 1930s by persisting that **"....today....culture is at a crisis" (Leavis, 1933: 17).** His diagnosis of this 'crisis' stemmed from his verdict on the attitude which sought to mechanise society, which subsequently led to mass production on one hand and made the individual less active within his society on the other. He gave an example of mass production, the Press. He sadly complained:-

> **"...When we consider, for instance, the processes of mass production and standardisation in the form represented by the Press[11], it becomes obviously of sinister significance that they should be accompanied by a process of levelling down" (Leavis, 1933: 18).**

Leavis looked at the press then as an aspect of mechanisation which like any **"machinery"** neglected the value of individuality. In the same vein, Leavis (1933) criticised other media of mass production apart from the Press. His criticism of films was even more fierce. His over-riding concern was that films, as one form of mass production, tend to undermine the individual who is, of course,

an important, if not the most important, component of the culture. Leavis vividly put it:-

> **".... Films involve surrender, under conditions of hypnotic receptivity, to the cheapest emotional appeals, appeals the more insidious because they are associated with a compellingly vivid illusion of actual life. It would be difficult to dispute that the result must be serious damage to the 'standard of living" (Leavis, 1933: 21).** [12]

Thus, both pioneers of the Cambridge School, Richards (1924) and Leavis (1933 & 1952) saw the media as a threat to culture, literature and tradition. Leavis (1952) concluded his essay by giving his final verdict about the media, cinema in particular **".... that deliberate exploitation of the cheap response which characterises our civilisation" (Leavis, 1933: 22).** In addition to this rejection of media on this side of the Atlantic, the United States Of America went through almost the same phase prior to Richards (1924) and Leavis (1933 & 1952) (**see Chapter 1: 3-4).**

It is important to mention here that criticism of new media was attacked in the United States of America as early as 1913 **(see chapter 1 for the American concern about the medium of cinema).** In 1913, for instance, the following quotation is typical:-

> **"Before the children's greedy eyes with heartless discrimination horrors unimaginable are .... presented night after night .... Terrific massacres, horrible catastrophes, motorcar crashes, public hangings, lynching .... All who care for the moral well-being and education of the child will set their faces like flint against this new form of excitement"**
>
> **[13] (Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 15, also see chapter 1).**

However, this rejection of mass media in the United Kingdom at least entered a new era in 1925. According to Stables (1992) in his aforesaid recent study on literature and Media Studies:-

**"....The progression from rejection of the mass media to their grudging or partial acceptance by the literary establishment began with changes in attitudes to films, symbolically marked, in Britain at least, by the inauguration of the London Film Society, which in 1925 was set up to undertake the serious discussion of feature films" (Stables, 1992: 18).**

Stables (1992) continues reviewing the history of the marriage between Media Studies and what he describes as the **"literary establishment"** which means here school, college, universities etc.

**."... The situation regarding television parallels the story of film studies: a growing awareness of the force of the medium resulted in an increased desire to explore it" (Stables, 1992: 18).**

As has been stated throughout Chapter 2, the 1980s have been considered as a new phase for integration between Media Studies, most notably television, with what Stables (1992) describes as the **"literary establishment"** This phase could

be described as the beginning of integration between **"literary establishment"** and Media Studies. Masterman's most important two books, *Teaching about Media* (1985) *and Teaching about Television* (1980) have been described by many writers **(see Chapter 2)** such as Stables (1992) as a remarkable manifestation of Media Studies within literature in schools. Masterman's central thesis focused on the necessity of teaching television in British schools. In addition to this, according to Stables (1992):-

> **".... there has been increasing awareness, too, of the power of advertising, probably to date the aspect of the media studied most in schools, at least in Britain; though the traditional treatment of advertisements by media theorists does not fit easily into established ways of teaching literature Similarly, the Press (including the popular press) is studied with an emphasis on news production. As yet, there is little published work on video either as a product or an art form" [14] (Stables, 1992: 18).**

Stables did not mention who those theorists are. The researcher would say Masterman mainly. This argument presumably is based on the assumption that advertisements threaten values while literature does not. However, Stables concludes his views on the background of the 'struggle' of Media Studies to integrate with literature over the past eight decades or so by stating:-

> **"Media studies, perhaps because of its history in championing the condemned, has retained an element of the self-conscious subversive. Along with the belief that 'the medium is the message' remains the determination somehow to see through the medium to the forces that model and exploit it. This gives the study of media texts a characteristic flavour quite different from that of the usual study of literary texts" (Stables, 1992: 19).**

This **"characteristic flavour"**, as Stables describes it, has throughout Chapter 2 of this work been explored in terms of the 1980s approaches of Media Studies by writers such as Masterman (1985 & 1980) and others such as Alvarado et al. (1987) **(see Chapter 2).**

## 3.2 Contemporary literature theories

In this section of this work, the focus will be on such an interesting critical outlook on the legacy of the traditional literature by Belsey's *Critical Practice* (1980). Belsey` work is important because it examines the legacy of the past in order to come up with a new outlook on literature. Belsey's main theme is that literature cannot be studied outside the context of its production. She states:-

> **".... the object of deconstructing the text is to examine the process of its production" (Belsey, 1980: 104).**

In view of this, her approach implies that the inherited notions of literature from the past, notably from the legacy of the Cambridge School in the United Kingdom, should be investigated. First of all Belsey examines the beginning of **"critical theory"** of literature since the 1940s. She disagrees with Leavis' theory. Belsey claims that:-

> **"....Leavis' own critical writings themselves demonstrate that there is no practice without theory" (Belsey, 1980: 11).**

She also criticises the 1940s and 1950s American 'New Critics'. Belsey discusses the works of the 1960s and 1970s critics such as Fish, Iser and Jauss. Her concern focuses on:-

> **".... the role of the reader in constructing meaning. Whilst Stanley's theory emphasises the individual response to the text, Iser thinks that 'mental images' are stimulated by the text's words. He assumes that these 'mental images' are the 'basic feature of ideation" (Belsey, 1980: 23).**

In this sense, Belsey echoes Barthes (1973) when he advised the teachers in Britain that:-

> **"... the goal of literary work ... is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but the producer of the text"[15] (Barthes 1973: 125).**

The researcher believes that Barthes' advice should be followed by all teachers world-wide. As will be seen in chapters 5, 6 and 7 the teachers who participated with their accounts in this work have clearly reinforced this notion of participative

and democratic education. They have consequently, rejected the authoritarian notion of education. Nonetheless, when it comes to media texts, it often poses a problem. According to Stables (1992):-

> **"... English teachers cannot be expected to give equal attention to all kinds of media texts - television advertisements rely heavily on non-verbal signs, for instance - and the thorny question of values may also cause English teachers to be selective in their attention to media texts in a way media experts might not choose to be" (Stables, 1992: 28).**

Obviously, this dilemma about what makes a media text or rather a literary text as a whole raises the controversial question of **"value".** Educational and media experts have always been in disagreement about such an issue. As Stables asserts:-

> **".... The real concern is whether some kinds of text have great implicit value than others, and the relationship of this notion of value to the agreed**

**suitability of the text as, say, a class-room reader" (Stables, 1992: 28).**

Thus, Stables' conclusion is ultimately two-fold:-

**".... that English should not replace Media Studies, and that within English, media texts should be given the same kind of treatment as literary texts, on the same assumption that the 'reading' of them can have positive consequences for our development, both as individuals and as thinking members of society" (Stables, 1992: 35).**

## 3.3 Media studies and the National Curriculum

**"If one were searching for collective myths or shared experiences of art in this century, television and film would inevitably emerge as the prime media by which they were carried, rather than a literary text. With echoes of how at the beginning of the last century English literature was dismissed by classical scholars as being beneath study, media are**

**now being cast out as not being a 'proper' subject. But it is hard not to see this Canute-like position being overrun by the hunger to study the means by which society communicates with itself and the democratic pressures for people to understand the information shaping their lives" (Coughlan, quoted in *TES*, 23 April, 1993: 1).**

It will be shown in the following pages of this chapter that the government attempted to reduce the presence of media studies in the National Curriculum. The aim was to go back to roots or basics, which of course includes classic literature. This has its origins in the legacy of Richards (1920s) and both Leavis (1930s & 1950s) and Thompson (1960s). This legacy has been thoroughly examined and discussed throughout this chapter. According to Barton (1992) Government ministers in the British Parliament have been unenthusiastic about placing major emphasis on teaching Media Studies within the National Curriculum. In his view they have always, seen Media Studies as a threat to English cultural heritage. He states (1992):-

**".... When it comes to literature, Government ministers remind me of those slightly embarrassed**

**types who store their video tapes in leather-bound books. For both, old books bestow status and respectability" (Barton, quoted in *TES,* November 13, 1992*:* vii).**

Barton continues describing those Government ministers' feelings about British literature:-

> **".... For the bashful video-collector, the mere appearance of a book-lined wall, however phoney, ensures an air of cultured refinement. For the Government, old books are, by definition, more worthy than new ones" (Barton, quoted in *TES,* 13 November, 1992: vii).**

He sees the Government's concern to prescribe specific works of literature as evidence of their fears about extending the teaching of media education or Media Studies:-

> **".... Hence the urge to make all 14-year-old read one of three Shakespeare plays, and the clear hints from the National Curriculum Council officials that more**

> **pre-20th century books will soon be prescribed at Key Stage 3" (Barton, quoted in *TES*, 13 November, 1992: vii).**

Furthermore, Barton explains the Government's favourable attitude towards literature in education rather than Media Studies by saying:-

> **".... In fairness, the video fans merely perceive old books as neutral. It is the form which matters, not their scooped-out insides. The Government is more aware of the potential power of books, seeing them as handy, if clumsy, weapons in the war of educational attrition. You can sling them at the teachers or scatter them as incendiaries for children to dodge" (Barton, quoted in *TES*, 13 November, 1992: vii).**

While he states that the British Government is deeply concerned about teaching literature as the main cultural concern, he confirms that the latest row about minimising Media Studies with English in favour of literature reinforces the old

debate about literature. In addition to the latter, Barton criticises this trend by claiming that:-

> **".... literature, along with grammar and spelling, has been unceremoniously requisitioned, like some old flagship. No matter that it was already in worthwhile but less ostentatious service" (Barton, quoted in *TES*, 13 November, 1992: vii).**

As a result of all this, he raises the role of what he describes as 'media alternatives'. Barton concludes:-

> **"As the political climate changes, so the symbolic function of books themselves seems to be changing. The proliferation of media alternatives to reading books has raised the stakes. Why read 'Adam Bede' when you can watch the television adaptation?" (Barton, quoted in *TES*, 13 November, 1992: vii).**

He also criticises the role of teachers by saying:-

**"....What is maddening is that English teachers knew this all along. But we recognised the value of teaching pre-20th century literature for what is was rather than what it represented. The report of the Shakespeare and School Project in the summer showed that more children than ever before have been enjoying and genuinely responding to Shakespeare...." (Barton, quoted in *TES*, 13 November, 1992: vii).**

Barton brings up this living proof from his own experience as a teacher, in order to show that there is no threat to British cultural literature to teach Media Studies besides 'classic' texts of literature. He continues:-

**".... This at a time when media alternatives to reading have grown, when schools' ability to purchase books has declined, and when literature is being represented as a hurdle over which children must clamber in order to pass some test of intellectual fitness" (Barton, quoted in *TES*, 13 november, 1992: vii).**

Barton seems to be in full agreement with other teachers such as Bazalgette. She, also, sees no rivalry between 'classic' texts of literature and Media Studies. Bazalgette states:-

> **"....The popular texts of other periods, like Shakespeare and Dickens, need to take their place alongside the popular texts of today [14] if children are to perceive the relevance, the interest and the importance of questions like 'who produced this, and how, and why, and for whom?" (Bazalgette, 1992: vii).**

She goes on to say:-

> **"By what logic can such questions be legitimately addressed to 'Of Mice and Men' but not to 'Civvies'? Pupils need to experiment with enduring forms of expression and judge their appropriateness as vehicles for their own ideas. What principles guarantee them access to ballad verse forms or first**

**person narration, but exclude continuity editing? Do you learn less about suspense narratives by studying Hitchcock as well as Dicken ?" (Bazalgette, 1992: V11).**

Initially, the Government seemed to take a positive attitude to Media Studies within the National Curriculum. In 1988 Baker, then the Education Secretary, came up with educational-political reforms. According to Bazalgette (1992):-

> **"... Baker briefed the English subject working party to make recommendations for Media Studies, and accepted the consequent requirements for the study of media texts as part of the statutory order" (Bazalgette, 1992: V11).**

In January 1989 Rumbold, then Minister of State, declared at a public conference that, according to Bazalgette:-

> **".... the ability to read media texts, that is to see them in the light of critical awareness and evaluation, and to have some understanding of the**

**processes that produce them, is an important skill for contemporary and future citizens" (Bazalgette, 1992: V11).**

Unfortunately the Government seemed poised to retract aspects of its reforms of 1988 and 1989 when rumour spread in mid-1990 that Media Studies might disappear from the English curriculum. These rumours disappointed many teachers throughout England and Wales. This is what Bazalgette (1992) had to say on behalf of her fellow-teachers:-

**"It is extraordinary to hear rumours that ministers are now considering the removal of even the relatively minimal media education 'and Media Studies' requirements in the current Statutory Order and programmes of study for English. If this provision is removed, the National Curriculum will lag behind the mother tongue curricula of many other Western European nations and even those of Scotland and Northern Ireland. After almost 100 years of audio-visual culture why should English and Welsh children be singled out for denial of**

**educational access to that cultural heritage? Today's primary school children won't just be the book-buyers of 2012: they'll be the television and radio audiences, the cinema-goers, the video renters as well. And some of them will be the directors, the editors, the schedulers, the producers, the scriptwriters and the accountants of an audio-visual culture which we haven't even dreamed about. Maybe we should start now" (Bazalgette, 1992: vii).**

These arguments, as will be shown in chapters 5 and 7 have profoundly, been debated by the respondents in this research.

# 3.4 Conclusion

**Before 1988 and 1989 the Government was more or less echoing the legacy of past educationists such as Richards (1924) and both Leavis and Thompson (1933), and Leavis (1933 & 1952) whose works have been discussed in previous sections of this chapter. In 1988 and 1989 the Government (or at least its representatives on the English Committee) began to realise the significance of**

**teaching Media Studies within the National Curriculum. However, in mid-1992 it was apparent that:-**

> **"the study of film, broadcasting and newspapers is poised to be cut from English lessons as part of the Government's efforts to reduce overload and force a return to basics in the subject" (quoted in Coughlan, *TES, April, 23, 1993*: 1).**

**The phrase 'basics in the subject' meant attention to spelling and grammar in the context of language but in literature it meant a concentration on classics such as Dickens' works etc. At the time of writing (1993), the British Prime Minister adopted a new domestic strategic policy which is called "back to basics". According to Coughlan in *TES*, April 23 1993:-**

> **".... the Prime Minister set the tone for much of the debate that was to follow about whether Media Studies had a place within the English curriculum. This has now been resolved in favour of the removal of any requirement to teach 'non-literary texts'. It means no Media Studies within the National**

**Curriculum" (quoted in Coughlan, *TES*, April, 23, 1993: 1).**

**The Prime Minister's apparent word on the subject (1992 Conservative Party Conference) departed from the views of the original chair of the English Committee:-**

> **".... Professor Brian Cox, who chaired the working group which wrote the existing curriculum in 1992, said children must know how they could be manipulated by the media. To many teachers of English and Media Studies this is one more disaster. If you are trying to get children interested in the classics you can often lead them from TV soap opera to Dickens" (quoted in *TES*, 1993: 1).**

Thus, study of one does not need to exclude study of the other. In the next chapter, the methodology and research approach into these matters and other related issues will be discussed.

# CHAPTER 4

# METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH APPROACH

**"In discovering theory, one generates conceptual categories or their properties from evidence; then the evidence from which the category emerged is used to illustrate the concept...the concept is undoubtedly a relevant theoretical abstraction about what is going on in the area studied" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 23).**

## 4.1 Description

In this section of the chapter the research methodology adopted for the study will be described. Other methodologies of research strategies which were considered will be described and discussed at the end of this chapter.

As a result of the researcher's readings of classic studies **(e.g., Glaser and Strauss' 1967 study The Discovery of Grounded Theory, Filstead's 1970 editorial Qualitative Methodology and Stern's 1980 study 'Grounded Theory-Methodology: its Uses and Processes'),** qualitative research using 'grounded theory' was considered most appropriate for this project.

The researcher also examined contemporary literature which has developed and refined approaches to qualitative methods **(e.g., Sherman and Webb's 1988 editorial Qualitative Research In Education: Focus and Methods, Anderson's 1990 publication Fundamentals Of Educational Research, Vulliamy's 1990 book Doing Educational Research In Developing Countries, Ely and his associates' 1991 publication Doing Qualitative Research: Circles Within Circles, Skinner and Allan's 1991 editorial Handbook For Students In The Social Sciences, Maykut and Morehouse's 1994 book Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophical and Practical Guide and Cohen and Manion's 1994 book Research Methods In Education Fourth Edition).**

Hence, the purpose of this chapter is to outline the aforesaid research approach and methodology used. Validity, reliability triangulation and other related issues will be dealt with later in the chapter.

## 4.1.1 A qualitative methodology guided by 'grounded theory'

In attempting to understand the theory and practice of the teaching of Media Studies in the United Kingdom (England and Wales) and the State of Qatar, it was decided that a qualitative approach using fieldwork interviews based on 'grounded theory' should be used **(Filstead, 1970: 6).**

The intention here was twofold: First, to attempt to contribute to closing the gap between theory and practice or at the least ambition, to narrow it. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967) there is:-

**"an embarrassing gap between theory and empirical research. The gap is as it was in 1941, when Blumer commented on it, and in 1949, when Merton optimistically suggested a solution" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: vii).**

Unfortunately, this gap between theory and practice is still almost the same. The second intention of using a qualitative methodology guided by the implications of a 'grounded theory' was to generate a number of accounts (transcribed interviews)

which could then be analysed according to 'grounded theory', as will be described in further detail in the following pages.

Through audio tape recorded interviews, as a strategy for collecting data, with theorists and practitioners involved directly with teaching Media Studies in two different cultural settings (i.e., the United Kingdom and the State of Qatar), the researcher was able to systematically analyse his respondents' accounts, after the audio-tape recorded interviews were transcribed in order to generate theory **(Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 1).**

The value of this approach is that it avoids a priori theorisation where the researcher may limit the responses of the interview respondents. Interview respondents are encouraged by the use of semi-structured or semi-directed **(Becker & Geer, in Filstead, 970: 133)** interviews to define and diagnose what is important and what is trivial within their cultural and professional world.

From an examination of the discourses of the respondents a 'grounded theory' approach attempts to derive theoretical concepts which are central to an understanding of the field **(Trow, in Filstead, 1970: 147).** According to Glaser and Strauss (1967):-

**"...The discovery of theory from data, systematically obtained and analysed, which we call grounded theory is a major task confronting sociology today, as we shall try to show, such a theory fits empirical situations" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 1).**

A qualitative approach based on grounded theory, can be applied to understand the empirical social context of the respondents and their behaviour within their social world under investigation. This treatment was also applied to the respondents in this study.

It is, perhaps, important to indicate that Glaser and Strauss (1967) referred to Becker and Geer's (1961) study. Becker and Geer's (1961) observational study, was concerned with developing a behavioural understanding of the first year medical students in the United States of America, while the students were working within their social setting (i.e., a hospital).

The process of generating a theory from the data, as has been described, involves a process of outlining a comparative cultural analysis between the accounts of the British two samples (the theorists and teachers of Media Studies at two major higher educational institutes in London and the secondary school practitioners in

England, London and Washington, Tyne and Wear), and those of the sample from Qatar higher education (the University of Qatar, the position of Media Studies, as well as the current developments will be dealt with in chapter 6). Using the theory and insights derived from the data it was hoped that a cultural approach to media studies in Qatar might be constructed. This transcultural notion will be dealt with in the concluding chapter, together with other notions of cultural accommodation which are derived from a negotiated cultural relationship **(see, for example, chapters 5, 6 and 7)** between the Islamic cultural values and those values of Western culture. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967):-

> **"Our discussion of comparative analysis as a strategic method for generating theory assigns the method its fullest generality for use on social units of any size, large or small, ranging from men or their roles to nations (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 21-22).**

Having analysed the sample's accounts in the systematic fashion described above and generated theory, it is important to shed some light on the insights such a qualitative analysis provides into the central meanings and concepts which are generated from the process of data analysis. The researcher's personal involvement and immersion in the accounts of his respondents during the process

of data analysis produced insights. These insights play a key role when it comes to generating theory from the given data. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967):-

> **"...insight is a crucial issue to theorising from data"**
>
> **(Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 251).**

They go on describing the researcher:-

> **"..As a highly sensitive and systematic agent...the researcher has insights and he can make the most of them through systematic analysis" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 251).**

Stern (1980) sets out five advantages of implementing qualitative research based on 'grounded theory' which were relevant to this study:-

> **"The conceptual frame work is generated from the data rather than from previous studies although previous studies always influence the final outcome of the work" (Stern, 1980: 21).**

Glaser and Strauss (1967) also emphasised this advantage. The present study avoided a priori theorisation by attempting to generate its concepts and assumptions from the data given by the respondents themselves. Hence, the theory derived from within the respondents, rather than being derived from elsewhere:-

> **"The researcher attempts to discover dominant processes in the social scene rather than describing the unit under study" (Stern, 1980: 21).**

> **"Every piece of data is compared with every other piece rather than comparing total indices" (Stern , 1980: 21).**

The researcher compared the 'concepts' which the respondents generated (e.g., 'classroom practice', 'becoming critical', 'media imperialism' etc.). The main purpose was to draw a comparison between the respondents on the issue and to assist the process of theory generation. As Stern points out:-

> **"The collation of data may be modified: that is false leads are dropped or more penetrating questions are asked as seem necessary" (Stern, 1980: 21).**

The researcher attempted to adopt the strategy recommended by Stern:-

> **"rather than following a series of linear steps the investigator works within a matrix in which several research process are in operation at once. The investigator examines the data as they arrive and begins to code, categorise, conceptualise and to write the first few thoughts concerning the research report almost from the beginning of the study" (Stern, 1980: 21).**

This approach to research has been used in the study of medical students, as has previously been mentioned earlier in the chapter, **(Becker & Geer, 1961),** inner city teachers **(Grace, 1978)** and social workers **(Harre-Hindmarsh, 1992).** In their attempt to understand the culture of the medical school Becker and Geer believed that respondent interviews would give the greatest insight:-

> **"We studied what was of interest to the people we were investigating because we felt in this way we would uncover the basic dimension of the medical school as a social organisation and the student's**

**progress through it as a social psychological phenomenon. We made the assumption that, on analysis, the major concerns of the people we studied would reveal such a basic dimension and that we could learn most by concentrating on these concerns" (Becker & Geer, 1961: 207).**

Stern (1980) has argued that the value of qualitative approach with 'grounded theory' outcomes is that it enables the researcher to find new conceptual frameworks beyond those already provided by the existing literature. The researcher can also become sensitive to the dominant process and central meanings operating in a particular social world and comparative use of data can be a continuous process. Data collection can be responsive to fieldwork experience.

Burgess (1984) also highlighted the notion that in qualitative interviewing researchers do not bear in mind a priori theorizing, instead theory is generated from data:-

**"The theory is therefore, not superimposed upon the data but emerges from the data that are collected" (Burgess, 1984: 9).**

Measor (1984) emphasises the importance of establishing and maintaining a good relationship with the respondents by researchers in order to be accepted in their social world. She states:-

> **"In qualitative research, the interviewer needs ways of easing access to respondents and strategies which help build relationships. Appearance, conversation, areas of interest and non-verbal signals are all important in this context. Time can act as a real constraint in building research relationships, but there are strategies which can help and allow space for rapport to build. The interviewer also needs ways of staying critically aware, while being able to enter the participant's world, to gain a strong picture of it, while remaining aware of which aspects of it are particular. It is a particular stance, but also a particular cast of mind!" (Measor, 1984: 76-77).**

To an extent these views on 'grounded theory' in relation to qualitative research methodologies have been echoed during the 1990s. In the following pages of this section the work of the 1990s' writers will be reviewed.

Allan (1991) gives a clear definition to the understanding contemporary writers hold of qualitative methods. The researcher finds this definition interesting because it is observed that some people are confused about what is meant by qualitative approaches implemented for the purpose of collecting and analyzing primary data. Allan (1991) defines:-

> **"the two main methods of qualitative data collection are participant observation...and qualitative, depth or unstructured interviews" (Allan, 1991: 177).**

In their fourth edition (1994) of their book *Research Methods In Education,* first published in 1982, Cohen and Manion (1994) are particularly, concerned with methods and methodology in educational research. They define methods as a:-

> **"range of approaches used in educational research to gather data which are to be used as a basis for**

**inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction" Cohen and Manion, 1994: 38).**

They refer to qualitative methods as **'interpretative paradigm'.** Apparently, they mean by this term those methods such as, participant observation and interviewing because these methods are concerned with interpreting and understanding human behaviour on a given phenomenon. It is important that the phenomenon under study must be investigated:-

**"as part of the context within which it lies" (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994: 68).**

Cohen and Manion (1994) define methodology as a means to enable researchers to, not merely understand the products of scientific inquiry but the process of the enquiry itself. This notion is clearly manifested in interviewing based on 'grounded theory'.

As was the case in this study the interviewing helped the researcher not only to understand the data collected but also, to understand the process of the enquiry.

Cohen and Manion (1994) describe the informal qualitative interviews on which this research was specifically based. In their view the value of informal interviews is the flexibility of approach:-

> **"in which the interviewer is free to modify the sequence of questions, change the wording, explain them or add to them.... the interviewer may have a number of key issues which he/she raises in conversational style" (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 271).**

As will be shown the researcher followed this pattern of interviewing described above. Cohen and Manion go on defining the research interview as:-

> **"a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research- relevant information, and focused by him/her on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction, or explanation. It is an unusual method in that it involves the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction**

**between individuals" (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 271-273).**

They (1994) also firmly link this research methodology to 'grounded theory' by stating that the interview can be a distinctive qualitative strategy for generating theory from data by providing insights into the 'theory' of the respondents:-

**"It may be used as the principal means of gathering information having direct bearing on the research objectives. ...By providing access to what is "inside a person's head" (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 272).**

The respondents themselves define the concepts and meanings related to their social context and their social processes. Thus, they become a significant source of data.

Writing on qualitative interviewing, Jones (1991) highlighted the notion that this method of obtaining qualitative data enables the researchers:-

**"to be insiders in the research relationship, interacting rather than merely establishing a**

**rapport with the people to whom they are speaking and observing" (Jones, 1991: 203).**

Jones (1991) provides an interesting view about qualitative interviewing from a feminist perspective, which emphasised the need to abandon the notions of control and detachment and replace them by more interactive approaches **(Jones, 1991: 203).** The reason why the researcher finds this view interesting is because the principles of qualitative methods especially those based on 'grounded theory' (e.g., mutual understanding) apparently meet the feminist's beliefs.

Jolly (1991) based her decision on the premise that 'grounded theory enables:-

**"the researcher to understand emerging view points on familiar problems. 'Grounded theory' provides a way to generate an understanding of human behaviour" (Jolly, 1991: 164).**

As a result of the flexibility of qualitative approaches the researcher is enabled to develop these **'emerging views'** as his/her respondents express them in a rapport atmosphere without being pressurised or constrained by a priori set of preconceived notions.

Harre-Hindmarsh (1992) provides similar views on qualitative and 'grounded theory' approaches to social investigation which has had an important influence on this study. Harre-Hindmarsh argues:-

> **"Qualitative techniques are, although time consuming, particularly useful when conducting small case study research concerned with identifying subjective experience and social meanings. Qualitative research enables the researcher to give priority to participants' perspectives (their definition of what is important) a rich data that conveys the meanings people give to situations"**
>
> **(Harre-Hindmarsh, 1992: 75).**

This emphasis by 'grounded theory' approaches on avoiding a priori theorising before embarking on the interviews with the respondents has also been expressed by almost all writers on qualitative methodology **(cf. Becker & Geer, 1961, Glaser & Strauss, 1967, Filstead, 1970, Grace, 1978, Stern, 1980, Ratcliff, 1983, Jolly, 1991, and Harre-Hindmarsh, 1992).**

In Harre-Hindmarsh' s view (1992):-

**"All grounded theory approaches share a genuine commitment to research and discovery, together with a rejection of a priori theorizing (Harre-Hindmarsh, 1992: 76)**

The researcher therefore, avoided preconceived theories in this research in order to discover and establish the theories held by the higher education theorists in London and Qatar as will be discussed in more detail later. The degree to which the process of generating theory from data can be successful depends on the sensitive handling of the respondents' data by the researcher.

To conclude this section it could be said that the review and discussion of both classic and contemporary literature has provided the guidelines to direct this inquiry. Given the understanding that research is a potential vehicle of theoretical discovery, the decision was made to use interviews so that the three samples in this study would be able to give their accounts of their social world, its concepts and meanings.

## 4.2 Related issues to methodology

## 4.2.1 Validity, reliability and triangulation

### 4.2.1.1 General discussion

It is necessary to address issues of validity, reliability and triangulation in qualitative research. These will be examined in this section.

The process of 'grounded theory' research requires the researcher to collect, edit and interpret data and existing concepts by a constant comparative analysis so that new theoretical constructs are developed out of this dynamic process. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), 'grounded theory':-

> **"must fit the situation being researched and work when put into use. By "fit" we mean that the categories[ (e.g., the central meanings in the case of this study)] must be readily (not forcibly) applicable to and indicated by the data under study; by "work" we mean that they must be meaningfully relevant to and able to explain the behaviour under study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 3).**

In qualitative research, questions of validity and reliability have to be faced. Jolly (1991) points out that in quantitative approaches:-

> **"reliability is established through the use of certain procedures for data collection and analysis. In qualitative research these issues are not addressed in the same way but qualitative researchers are sensitive to these issues" (Jolly, 1991: 165).**

However the qualitative researcher has the same obligation as the quantitative researcher (i.e., to be as clear and systematic as possible about how the data was collected, from whom and about how it was analysed).

## 4.2.1.2 Validity

Questions of validity in qualitative research have been much debated. Ratcliff (1983) suggests that in assessing validity in every kind of research it should be remembered that:-

**"data do not speak for themselves, there is always an interpreter or a translator" (Ratcliff, 1983: 140).**

Bernstein (1977) points to the dangers of **"invisible control"** in the editing and interpretation of interview accounts and stresses that:-

**"the methods of this transformation must be made public so that its assumptions may be criticised" (Bernstein, 1977: 148).**

It has been argued that one of the major tests of validity in qualitative research is that the categories and concepts produced are acknowledged as valid and meaningful by members of the social world being studied **(Dale, 1973: 177).** Ideally, this means that the edited version of the data, the **"research account"** should be returned to the participants for their critical response.

In the following pages the work of other writers who hold a different perspective into the validity of such an approach, will be reviewed and discussed. The researcher believes that the work of Fay (1975) *Social Theory and Political Practice* and (1987) *Critical Social Science: Liberation and its Limits* as well as the work of Layder (1982) 'Grounded Theory: a Constructive Critique', are most

appropriate for debating -from a critical perspective- the issue of validity, as it differs from the interpretivist perspective discussed above.

While the acknowledgement of both the transcribed interviews and the data analysis, by the respondents under investigation is a major criterion of validity according to Dale **(Dale, 1973: 177)**, it is argued by other writers in the field, to be only one of the criteria for there are more major criteria which ought to be addressed **(Fay, 1975: 94).**

Layder (1982) holds the view that the mere reliance on the subjective perceptions of respondents of their social world is not sufficient **(Layder, 1982: 118).** Both Fay (1975) and Layder (1982) disagree with Dale (1973) because they argue that too much emphasis is given to the respondents' own accounts and description of their social contexts.**(cf. Fay, 1975: 109-110 and Layder, 1982: 116-117).** Fay claims that whilst obtaining first hand data from respondents within their social settings provides a subjective understanding about their **'micro world',** it neglects the belief that individuals may not necessarily have **'full'** knowledge of the social world in which they found themselves. Layder (1982) argues that such an approach towards validity based on subjective views may merely result in the sheer description of:-

> **"interactive realities without inquiring into, or theorising the wider, external, contextual conditions of these interactive realities" (Layder, 1982: 115).**

In this sense, Layder (1982) and Fay (1975) suggest that the respondents' interactive realities ought to not be examined in isolation of their social and historical contexts, of which social constraints is major part in Fay's (1975) words.

To round up this crucial point in the discussion of validity in relation to qualitative research it is important to note that the interpretivists such as, Glaser and Strauss (1967), and Dale, in this case (1973) have been criticised by writers such as, Fay (1975) and Layder (1982) for neglecting the objective fact (i.e., examining the persons' self-subjective understandings and interaction realities in relation to the overall societal structural context). Harre-Hindmarsh points out that:-

> **"Interpretivist grounded theory approaches have been criticised, particularly with regard to the potential to ignore the relationship between the structural context and persons' subjective understandings and interactions" (Harre-Hindmarsh, 1992: 76).**

However, Harre-Hindmarsh takes the view that if interpretation of respondents' accounts takes place within a defined social context, then a significant measure of validity in the interpretation of responses can be expected:-

> **"...I assume that any construction and interpretation of the world is the outcome of the dialectical interplay between socio-historical conditions and persons' subjective understandings, I considered that it was necessary to conceptualise persons as active, whilst not always fully aware of, or articulate about, the socio historical conditions that influence their understandings. People are conceptualised as capable of developing such awareness and of acting upon that, thus of continually (or dialectally) reinterpreting and reconstructing their world - given the dialectical interplay between conditions and understandings" (Harre-Hindmarsh, 1992: 78).**

This study has attempted to adopt such an approach. In order to complete the debate about validity the issues of both internal validity and external validity will be dealt with.

Rose (1982) points out that internal theoretical validity involves the researcher in an examination of theoretical concepts evaluated in relation to the evidence presented and the logical consistency of the argument. This procedure was followed and it is claimed that this study has internal theoretical validity.

Rose also, points out that issues of external validity have to do with the relationship of the research to a wider body of literature and are not strictly methodological issues **(Rose, 1982: 104-105).**

## 4.2.1.3 Reliability

Reliability is an issue which has to be addressed in qualitative research although it is more central to quantitative methods. Reliability basically refers to consistency in measurement **(Anderson, 1990: 12)** of variables such as in survey research using questionnaire or interviews on a large scale.

A reliable test should give the same results every time it is taken. If given data relates to objective criteria rather than personal impression this data can be described as reliable. If responses are the same about the phenomenon of discrimination in a given situation over repeated measurement this means that these responses are reliable. In quantitative research reliability complements validity.

Nonetheless, one approach to reliability in qualitative research is, as Jolly (1991) suggests, to attempt cumulative research using the same qualitative methods:-

> **"its use and applicability in similar settings, in different situations and problems over time. (Jolly, 1991: 66).**

In her view, reliability may be achieved:-

> **"from the investigator's best analyses and this includes his/her skills, resources, creativity and analytical ability. No two investigators are identical. It would be more appropriate to say that if one were to apply a particular 'grounded theory'**

> **to a similar situation, will it work? i.e., permit the researcher to understand and interpret phenomena" (Jolly, 1991: 66).**

In other words, the reliability of the findings of this present study will have to be tested by cumulative research in other social settings.

## 4.2.1.4 Triangulation

Having discussed validity and reliability, it is also important to discuss triangulation. Denzen (1970) outlines the concept of triangulation and how it may be used in qualitative research.

In his view, methodological triangulation enables the researcher to approach his/her research problem by using multiple methods. This notion is based on Trow's view (whose work was discussed in this chapter) that there is no single and superior method to investigate a problem.

For example, one could understand from this that if this researcher had had the time and the resources he could have employed more than one method to examine

media Studies in terms of theory and practice (e.g., using participant observation as well as interviewing).

By the same token, questionnaire and survey methods can be used. This enables the researcher to achieve an active and integrated approach between two or multiple methods.

However, this research used one single method (i.e., interviewing) because of the limited time and resources, but the researcher used data triangulation which is one of the four varieties of triangulation. It can be claimed for this study that a form of data triangulation was employed (i.e., the collection of three sets of perspectives from different constituencies of educators upon the theory and practice of Media Studies and Media Education). The use of such data triangulation it was hoped would provide a rich and varied data source from which grounded theory might be derived **(Denzin, 1970: 472-474).**

## 4.3 The sample

The sample in this study consisted of four higher educational institutes theorists and teachers of Media Studies, in two different institutes in London, five secondary school teachers (practitioners) in London and Washington, Tyne and

Wear, in England and three higher educational teachers at the University of Qatar, as has been indicated earlier in the chapter.

It is necessary to locate and justify the selection of this sample for the purpose of the research. It must be said at the outset that the research faced considerable obstacles (i.e., constraints of time and resources). Many of those who were approached in the field work were unable to respond positively because of other work commitments. This is particularly true in regard to the school teachers respondents as a result of the National Curriculum and the work pressures arising.

As a result of these difficulties the co-operative sample was small being only 12 respondents. However, it is argued that although the sample is small each constituency within it represents a strategic perspective on Media Studies and Media Education (i.e., a valuable triangulation of perspectives was obtained). It is accepted, given the small size of the sample the findings reported here can only be regarded as illustrative of or illuminative of key issues in the field. The specific justification of the nature of the sample is as follows:-

1. It was thought to be necessary to gain insights into the views and perspectives used by critical definers of Media Studies and Media Education in the United Kingdom cultural context. This accounts for the interviews with the sample of

teachers of higher education institutes in London. These respondents have been very influential in shaping Media Studies and Media Education.

2. At the same time it was thought to be important to sample the perspectives of a small group of critical practitioners of the subject under investigation. This explains the interviews with the teachers of Media Studies in the London schools and a school in the North East.

The intention here was to investigate the extent which the theories produced in the higher education institutions were reproduced in the school or modified by the teachers at a practical classroom level. In one sense, it could be said the research was attempting to investigate elements of what might be called 'grand theory' on the one hand and 'practical theory' on the other hand.

The reason for selecting samples in London and North East was to investigate any possibility of regional cultural differences to Media Studies.

3. The justification of the selection of teachers at higher education in the State of Qatar was to generate a comparative cultural examination of the subject under study.

The three respondents represented the entire Department of Media Studies at the University of Qatar. The intention here was to investigate the theories and perspectives of teachers of this subject in an Islamic context and to see to what extent their concepts were different from those held by the higher education teachers of the United Kingdom.

## 4.4 The interview strategy

The interviews for this study were audio-tape recorded and followed a semi-structured format. A series of two sets of questions were prepared after reading both classic and contemporary literature on the rise of Media Studies, its historical background and the rise of concern about Media Studies since the 1980s.

The relationship between English, media studies and the national curriculum was also examined. This enabled the researcher to be aware of the arguments about teaching Media Studies in England and Wales.

The two lists of questions were about various aspects of 'media studies' and its theory and practice. The intention of the interviews was to encourage the research participants to develop the discussion in ways which they thought to be important.

Great care was taken to establish an atmosphere of rapport so that the respondents felt at ease and were able to speak freely about their views of Media Studies, the effect of television and other related matters.

After the researcher audio-tape recorded the interviews with his respondents, the interviews were subsequently transcribed. These transcribed interviews were then subjected to data analysis. It is probably worth mentioning that the researcher chose the means of audio-tape recording, rather than, for instance, relying solely on taking notes as the respondents started revealing their accounts, because this was the best method of providing the richness of their discourse.

## 4.5 Data analysis

In this phase of the research process the researcher was guided by the following consideration:-

> **"While chronologically the analysis of data comes very near the end of the research process, the wise researcher does not wait until after his data have been collected to consider how he will analyse them (i.e., summarise the observations so that they will**

**yield answers to the questions guiding the inquiry...decisions concerning almost every phase of the research sequence should be made in anticipation of specific modes of data analysis). To fail to do so is to run the risk of gathering either insufficient or superfluous data on the one hand, or of gathering relevant data in inappropriate form on the other" (Franklin & Osborne, 1971: 415).**

Thus, in analysing the research transcribed data the researcher followed approaches used by Grace (1978) and by Harre-Hindmarsh(1992). The transcribed data were read and re-read many times in an attempt to become fully immersed in the social context and in the understanding of the respondents. By this process it was hoped that the researcher would become sensitive to the central meanings and categories which the respondents used in their accounts.

It is important to stress that, the researcher generated the central concepts from his respondents' accounts (e.g., 'Media Studies', 'Media Education', 'media imperialism' etc.).

In his study of inner city teachers, Grace (1978) described central meanings and categories as:-

> **"those aspects of their (i.e., the teachers) discourse to which they devoted most time; to which they frequently returned as a point of reference and in relation to which they exhibited particular engagement in terms of emphasis in delivering and greater animation during the interview" (Grace, 1978: 114).**

This procedure was followed and central meanings and categories were then related to existing theoretical literature to try to produce some new grounded theory. This notion was based on the following belief that qualitative methodology's:-

> **"intent is to prevent imposing alien meanings upon the actions of the subjects [participants]. In making up structured interviews [the researcher] draws on his knowledge of meanings gained from participation in the social order he[or she] is**

**studying. He can be assured of a medium of successful communication only because he is dealing in the same language and symbolic system as his [participants] (Vidich, in Filstead, 1970: 165).**

These matters were manifested during the researcher's participation with his respondents in this study. In addition to this, as has already been indicated in the chapter, cultural comparative analysis was undertaken to see to what extent the different cultural contexts of England and of Qatar produced different sets of central meanings or categories (e.g., 'Media Studies' and 'media imperialism').

The notion of comparative analysis as has been referred to earlier in this chapter, derives mainly from Glaser and Strauss' (1967) school of thought. In their view:-

> **"Generating of theory through comparative analysis both subsumes and assumes verifications and accurate descriptions, but only to the extent that the latter are in the service of generation" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 28).**

Having said that, the strategy of comparative analysis, leads to the generation of two useful theories from which the field of sociology derives, among other theories (e.g., grounded theory). They are substantive and formal theories. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967):-

> **"By substantive theory, we mean that developed for a substantive, or empirical, area of sociological inquiry,..." (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 32).**

This study is a good example of 'substantive theory', because it is concerned with the empirical social world of teachers of 'media studies', which is in itself an inquiry into one of the most important fields in sociology (i.e., an attempt to understand the teachers' social context, in order to generate 'grounded theory').

Glaser and Strauss (1967) were referring to **"empirical area of sociological inquiry" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 32)**, such as **"professional education" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 32)** on which the present research relies in fulfilling its purposes, as has already been cited. Glaser and Strauss (1967) mean by 'formal theory' that:-

> **"...developed for a formal, or conceptual area of sociological inquiry,..." (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 32).**

The strategy for comparative cultural analysis, in the light of Qatar's sample and England's sample furthered the generation of substantive theory. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967):-

> **"a general method of comparative analysis furthers grounded theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 1).**

## 4.6 Advantages and disadvantages of qualitative methodology

It is important to indicate that the following advantages and disadvantages strictly refer to the qualitative methodology used in this study. The researcher registered them while he was embarking on the research.

Qualitative methodology helps the researcher to understand his respondents' views on the matter under study (i.e., the teaching of 'Media Studies' in England

and the State of Qatar). It also enables him to generate, understand and develop the concepts the respondents express (e.g., 'realism in the media') which relate to their social context under inquiry.

Thus, their accounts derive from within their own consciousness, as the only source of first hand knowledge. They become their own self witness. Hence, the researcher does not need to interview his respondents within a specified framework of a priori theorising as the respondents provide him with their own theories. This, of course reinforces the notion of 'grounded theory' (i.e., that the theory is generated from the data alone). In this research an attempt was made to relate what was said to the social and cultural context of the respondents.

A researcher needs to be aware of the possible disadvantages of the chosen methodology. In terms of this research the implications of working across two cultures had to be considered. The researcher in this study attempted to derive 'grounded theory' from the discourses of the respondents. The researcher was able to gain some insights into his respondents' social worlds by interviewing them in the context of their work.

However, disadvantages can arise when the researcher has limited knowledge of the respondents or of their work situations. Moreover, to not know the

respondents well and not being involved in what they do and say by seeing and hearing them distances the researcher from his respondents' social world. Consequently, this disadvantage handicaps a researcher's ability to understand their discourse within their social world.

During data analysis, a researcher may exclude certain aspects of his respondents' accounts, for political or other reasons. This exclusion may distort the analysis. The failure to interpret impartially the world of the respondents from their accounts, rather than from the researcher's edited version could pose a problem for the validity and reliability of the study.

This problem requires the researcher to be self - monitoring and reflexive about the grounds for his interpretation of data. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) put it:-

> **"We act in the social world and yet are able to reflect upon ourselves and our actions.."**
> **(Hammersley and Atkinson, 1991: 25).**

Reflexivity is an essential part in the process of data analysis. Dealing with the respondents' accounts, as the sole source of data, restricts the researcher's

capability to check about the data elsewhere. Instead, he has to rely to an important extent on his respondents.

This methodology consumes lots of time in terms of contacting the respondents. Also the interviews, because of their depth and length are time-consuming, may discourage some respondents from taking part , as was the case in this inquiry.

## 4.7 Ethical issues

In this section of the chapter the ethical issues which surrounded the methodology will be dealt with. The main ethical code which has been held firmly by the researcher throughout this qualitative inquiry, is that of respect for the respondents and for the integrity of their discourses.

Therefore, the British respondents were asked whether it was possible to tape-record their interviews, to which they all agreed. The researcher then, explained to his respondents that their tape-recorded interviews would be transcribed and subjected to data analysis, only for the purposes of the inquiry under study.

Although the researcher did not notice any reservations, he wanted to state clearly that their accounts would not be used for any other purposes and would not

be handed over to any person or any department. This particular ethical consideration was applicable to all respondents in the sample.

In the case of the sample from Qatar, the researcher realised that the respondents were not in favour of their accounts being tape-recorded. They offered to take the questions away, to answer them privately. Ethically, it was vitally important to understand and respect their wish.

It is relevant to emphasise that qualitative methodology is a relatively new approach in the state of Qatar. Quantitative methodology (e.g., descriptive research, using questionnaire, as an instrument for the collection of data) is by contrast largely used in the State of Qatar.

The researcher, also sounded out his British respondents on whether they would like a copy of their interviews to be sent to them. They did not request this. However, the researcher sent a copy of the data analysis to each respondent, as an ethical and moral consideration, as well as a procedure for checking the validity of the data analysis. No serious disagreement with the researcher's interpretation was forthcoming. Finally, the researcher respected his respondents' wish to remain anonymous, as has been indicated earlier.

## 4.8 Description and discussion of other methodologies

The following methodologies have been considered for this research, though they were eliminated for good reasons which will be addressed in the following pages.

### 4.8.1 The methodology of participant observation

A number of pioneering studies used the methodology of participant observation, as a strategy for collecting data **(e.g., the American medical school students' study which was conducted by Becker and Geer in 1961),** as has been referred to earlier in the chapter. This research technique can be described as a field work methodology in which the researcher observes an empirical social context to which he or she may or may not belong. The methodology of participant observation has been considered by many researchers **(cf. Becker & Geer: 1961; Filstead: 1970; Friedrichs & Ludtke: 1975 etc.)** as an intensive strategy for field work research. For example, Filstead (1970) described it as an:-

**"in-depth interviewing, total participation in the activity being investigated, field work etc. which allow the researcher to obtain first-hand knowledge about the empirical social world in question" (Filstead, 1970: 6).**

Becker and Geer (1970) go even further than that by claiming that, among all qualitative methodologies, the methodology of participant observation is the most appropriate for collecting data. They (1970) state:-

**"the most complete form of the sociological datum, after all, is the form in which the participant observer gathers it: An observation of some social event, the events which precede and follow it, and explanations of its meaning by participants and spectators, before, during and after its occurrence. Such a datum gives us more information about the event under study than data gathered by any other sociological method. Participant observation can thus provide us with a yardstick against which to measure the completeness of data gathered in other**

**ways, a model which can serve to let us know what orders of information escape us when we use other methods (Becker & Geer, in Filstead, 1970: 133).**

As far as this study is concerned the researcher, though he considered using participant observation, because of the advantages which have been discussed earlier, perceived some important disadvantages.

First, because the researcher is foreign, it was believed that there would be problems with social and cultural integration. The methodology of participant observation requires engagement in the significant cultural respondents' activities.

Becker and Geer (1961), for example, had not experienced such an obstacle, for they are American, and they were able to participate fully with their fellow-American in their empirical social world.

Secondly, participant observation methods require an investment of time in particular institutional settings and this was not available to the researcher. It was for these reasons that participant observation was not adopted as a research approach.

### 4.8.2 Comparative examination between the interview and the methods of participant observation

The interview, as a technique for gathering data suits a small case study. It therefore, concentrates on the respondents as 'theorists' who have stories to tell about the social environment they work within, rather than being mere objects under investigation. The method of interviewing is concerned with identifying the respondents' social meanings.

The findings based on the interview would not necessarily represent all the phenomena under study because of its limited range of inquiry. In the method of participant observation, the representation of data about the phenomena under investigation is bound to give a larger picture.

Having said that, interviewing the respondents in their social world in the form of one to one conversation between the researcher and the respondents encourages the respondents to appreciate the researcher's efforts in being interested in understanding his or her social context without feeling under direct scrutiny as in the methods of participant observation. This two way flow of understanding

between the researcher and the respondent is important in attempting to prove their discourse and their theories.

As this study was primarily concerned with the collection of respondents' accounts about Media Studies and Media Education interviews appeared to be the best methodological approach.

## 4.8.3 The methodology of descriptive research

Quantitative methodology often uses the questionnaire as an instrument for collecting data. It is thus, concerned with providing statistics or coded informations about an area of research. According to Warwick and Lininger (1975), this methodology is particularly, suitable for large scale surveys. Ebel (1975) believes that the methodology of descriptive research is applicable in carrying out large scale surveys.

In his view its advantages are that this methodology enables the researcher to identify and subsequently to understand the variables which are associated with particular problems, to identify and diagnose those problems and to generate knowledge that can be effective in solving those problems **(Ebel, in Warwick & Lininger, 1975: 72).**

## 4.8.4 Questionnaire, as a method for gathering quantitative data

Almost all quantitative methodologies rely on the questionnaire, as an instrument for collecting data. Strictly speaking the questionnaire can be described as a set of questions distributed to a random sample of respondents. This set of questions is designated to obtain quantitative data about a certain area of research. This set of questions which is called 'questionnaire' can be sent by mail to respondents or can be read out to respondents by phone or handed over to respondents to be filled in by respondents or by an interviewer.

There are two kinds of questionnaire. The first is described as close ended. A close ended questionnaire has two forms. In the first form, the respondent is simply asked to chose from the predetermined answers such as yes or no. Whilst in the second form, the respondent is asked to select from a list of predetermined answers. The second kind is described as an open ended questionnaire. According to this kind the respondent is given a list of questions into the area of research and it is completely up to the respondent to answer as he or she wishes. As far as the format of close ended questionnaire is concerned it is more appropriate to implement it in case of conducting research by phone, mail or when the illiteracy in the society is high. As for the second kind of questionnaire, the

open ended format, it is used when an interviewer asks the open ended questions to the respondent or when the level of literacy is quite high among the population **(Abercrombie, et al. 1984: 200).**

## 4.8.5 Comparative examination between quantitative research and qualitative research for the purposes of this study

Before comparing the two methodologies, one has to emphasise the view that both forms of research are needed in social sciences. There are areas of research in which the researcher has to use quantitative methodology such as, population census, measuring the size of listening to a certain national radio which is usually called 'audience research' etc. These areas require huge statistics and testing the validity of the findings repeatedly under the same conditions, in order to obtain the same results.

As has been shown in chapter 1 Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince's, 1958 longitudinal study **(see chapter 1: 9),** among other many British researchers (see **chapters 1 and 2)** used for example, quantitative methodology to outline the

relationship between watching television and school productivity in seven major cities in the United Kingdom.

On the other side of the Atlantic, as has been shown in chapter 6 Gerbner and his associates in their 1972 and 1979's longitudinal studies, among many American researchers, used quantitative data to count the violent instances on American television and other issues during a period between 1972 and 1979 **(see chapter 6, see also Gerbner, et al. 1972: 28-187 & 1979: 177-196).**

Similarly, there are areas of research in which the researcher has to use qualitative methodology as was the case with this study. As has been said in the preceding pages, the focus of qualitative methodology is to generate in-depth understanding of cultural and social phenomena rather than providing statistics based on quantification and precise measurement.

Writing on the 'claimed' historical clash between quantitative research and qualitative research which began in the 1930s, Glaser and Strauss (1967) stated that:-

**"... there is no fundamental clash between the purposes and capacities of qualitative and**

**quantitative methods or data. What clash there is concerns the primacy of emphasis on verification or generation of theory-to which heated discussions on qualitative versus quantitative data have been linked historically. We believe that each form of data is useful for both verification and generation of theory, whatever the primacy of emphasis" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 18).**

Having stated that, one could say that while quantitative methodology is concerned with counting, for example instances in the phenomena under investigation (e.g., television violence) as was the case with **(e.g., Himmelwiet et al. 1958 longitudinal study and Gerbner, et al. 1972 and 1779's longitudinal studies)** mentioned above, qualitative methodology is concerned with observing and understanding the phenomena under inquiry.

Qualitative methodology frequently uses either the interview or participant observation. In quantitative research the members in the sample are usually dealt with as 'objects', while in qualitative methodology they are respondents. For this research, qualitative methods, especially the use of interviews was the most suitable approach.

## 4.9. The research objectives

**Finally, the objectives of this research are as follows:-**

**a. To understand the theory and practice of Media Studies' teachers in institutions of higher education and other cultural institutions which influence the education of teachers in England.**

**b. To examine the theory and practice of a sample of secondary school teachers of Media Studies.**

**c. To analyse the main themes in the theory and practice of these educators with special reference to controversial aspects and debates about the influence of television in schooling and society.**

**d. To compare these findings with field work material obtained by interviewing Media Studies' teachers in the University of Qatar.**

**e. To attempt to generate grounded theory from these data which might guide the development of Media Studies and Media Education in Qatar. This raises important questions about the relations of Western cultural**

**values and Islamic cultural values and whether or not there can be a negotiated cultural settlement.**

These objectives will be addressed in the next subsequent chapters.

# CHAPTER 5

# MEDIA STUDIES IN TEACHER EDUCATION: INSTITUTIONAL APPROACHES

## 5.1 Introduction

**"The ability to speak the language of the people who cooperate on an action-research project can best be obtained by sharing their life as much as possible. An outsider is at a disadvantage in this respect. But as far as his ability to understand different points of views is concerned, the outsider has many advantages. He is likely to have a wider experience with different personality types and various outlooks on life. And he is in a better position to maintain a certain (inner distance). It is important to realise that such an inner distance is as vital as the involvement of the researcher with the people. Unconscious reaction to the informant as a person**

**or to his personal and social values vitiates the data. Frankness about values and clear-cut value positions also may invalidate the significance of information, if the situation is not properly met. But this is not likely to do as much damage as unconscious reaction, provided the researcher has a real understanding of different value positions, and provided he has enough psychological training to interpret and evaluate his material" (Sullivan, Queen & Patrick, 1970: 91).**

In order to understand and ultimately to analyse the respondents' accounts about their social world, the researcher's data was guided through the following phases. The first phase was to read the data in close detail **(see chapter 4).** The main reason for so doing was to become immersed in the respondents' discourse and world view as far as this is possible. The second phase was to generate central meanings and concepts. In the third phase, the way the respondents expressed their concepts was highlighted and in the fourth and final phase the researcher attempted to find out by whom the respondents were influenced in the view of their accounts (i.e., to understand their theoretical perspective).

It has to be noted that this is a reflection on what has already been indicated in chapter 4. It is also important to note that the four phases of the analytical process mentioned above will be also applied to the data analysis in the next two chapters.

## 5.2 The sample

Although the sample in this chapter together with the samples in the next two chapters have been discussed in chapter 4 it is perhaps relevant to give a brief summary.

Four respondents co-operated with the researcher in four separate interviews to investigate Media Studies in higher education institutions. The first three are teachers (theorists) in a major higher educational institute in London concerned with teacher education, and one in a major cultural institution.

### 5.2.1 About the institutions

The London Institute of Education prepares both beginning and experienced teachers for obtaining initial and higher qualifications (i.e., Post Graduate Diploma, Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy in Media Studies). The aim is

to qualify Media Studies teachers for teaching the subject in secondary schools and higher educational institutes as well.

The British Film Institute (The BFI) is concerned mainly with the development and the study of film as an art from cultural perspectives. It embarks, among other major issues, on conducting courses in film and television education.

## 5.3 Introductory note to the analysis

In the course of analysing central concepts (see chapter 4) the researcher has to note that, from his point of view, analysis is about meaning in contexts. In other words, analysing the central concepts was concerned with the accounts in their contexts.

Analytically speaking, quoting a respondent, in relation to a concept (e.g., 'Media Education' and 'Media Studies') refers to that discourse within the context of the concept 'Media Education' and 'Media Studies'. However, it was also necessary to use parts of the same quotation located in a different context (e.g., discussions of the concept 'being participative').

The point is made here that extensive use of quotation is necessary to understand the central meanings of the respondents and what may sometimes appear as repetition is discourse being used in different contexts. This introductory note to the analysis is also applicable to the next two chapters.

## 5.4 The Central Meanings: Generated Concepts

The term 'concepts' or 'central meanings' imply the same, more or less. They are the specific concepts and meanings which arise in Media Studies and Media Education. They are the discourse about (e.g., 'language', 'narrative', 'institution', 'audience', 'representation', 'the production process', 'Media Education', 'Media teaching', 'media training', etc.).

Some of these concepts the respondents made quite explicit (e.g., 'pedagogy', 'theory', 'practice'), others were not so explicitly outlined (e.g., 'dictatorship', 'news coverage', 'audience'). Having said that, they clearly implied them in a set of phrases, sentences and words.

In the discourse of their interviews the four London respondents mentioned and highlighted a number of central concepts. Two of these were 'Media Education'

and 'Media Studies'. These concepts tended to be complicated and controversial throughout the respondents' accounts.

Before the researcher begins to outline the reasons for this complication and controversy from the respondents' accounts it is important to note the frequency of the use of these concepts.

Firstly, because it reflects the emphasis the respondents put on either concept. Secondly, because it also highlights their concern about the concepts as being inseparably pertinent to their own understanding of the issues.

By close examination of the data, the researcher found that respondent A used the concept 'Media Education' twenty-two times, whilst she used the concept 'Media Studies' fifteen times. In other words her emphasis in discussion was to give priority to the concept 'Media Education'.

Respondent A had written a number of books concentrating on the two concepts. She most importantly entitled her 1991 book *Media Education* obviously to reinforce and emphasise the importance of this concept. Additionally, she had written a series of articles in the *Times Educational Supplement (TES)* focusing her argument on the theme that the Governmental attempts to minimise Media

Studies within the National Curriculum **(see Chapters 2 and 3),** led to what she described as a **"literary holocaust"** [1] **(see chapter 2).**

Respondent B used the term 'Media Education' twelve times during the interview, while he used the term 'Media Studies' twenty eight times. This reflected his dominant concern about teaching Media Studies in the classroom. This concern he made very clear throughout his publication **(e.g., Watching Media Learning. See Chapter 2)** and his various articles in the *Times Educational Supplement (TES).*

Respondent C used the term 'Media Education' only eight times, whilst he used the term 'Media Studies' twenty-five times. This also reflects his dominant emphasis upon the importance of Media Studies which he had outlined in his books and articles.

Respondent D used the concept 'Media Education' only once while he used the concept 'Media Studies' five times. Basically, this respondent did not devote so much time to these two concepts as he did with other concepts (e.g., 'classroom practice'). This could perhaps be explained by the fact that he believes that the definitions of both concepts are controversial.

Having clarified these features of the analysis this chapter will report critically upon the central concepts and the central meanings used by the respondents as follows:-

* Media Education

* Media Studies

* becoming participative

* media imperialism

* importance of the media versus influence of the media

* entertainment

* classroom practice

* realism

It is relevant, perhaps, to assert that some of these concepts (e.g., 'Media Education' and 'Media Studies'), were major categories on which most respondents placed a lot of emphasis in varying degrees, whilst other central meanings were generated by some of the respondents (e.g., 'becoming participative').

It is also important to stress that there were other concepts used by the respondents (e.g., 'narrative study', 'importance of the media versus influence of mass media'), which the researcher has analysed as sub-central concepts, under one of the central meanings (e.g., the sub-concept 'narrative study') has been dealt with under the main concept 'classroom practice'.

## 5.4.1 Media Education and Media Studies

Respondent A placed a great emphasis on the concept 'Media Education' as a broader discipline:-

**"I would rather use the term 'Media Education'. The way I like to use that is as a much broader term. I don't see it as opposed to Media Studies. I**

**see Media Studies as a part of Media Education" (appendix 1: 646).**

**"...Media Education includes Media Studies but also includes other ways in which the media might be taught" (appendix 1: 646).**

**"...There is a continual struggle about what Media Education should be and might be. Even within Britain there isn't a very stable consensus about what Media Education is" (appendix 1: 646).**

**"...I think Media Education's institutional position is also precarious. For those reasons the subject is constantly in development, and teachers need to revisit Media Education and to relearn approaches and theories that relate to Media Education. Also, of course, there are always new people coming into Media Education" (appendix 1: 646).**

**"...All teachers in their initial training ought to have an element of Media Education teaching to ensure that when they are using media or asking the students to look at evidence for inspiration or whatever kind of material they are looking at, they bring a fairly consistent set of critical attitudes to that task" (appendix 1: 646).**

**"...There is a way in which you can say that in some senses Media Education is much more established and has much more official status than it ever had before" (appendix 1: 647).**

**"...I have a very long term mission which consists of replacing English and possibly other subjects in the humanities with something with a broader grouping called Media Education of which English would be a part" (appendix 1: 647).**

**"...Pragmatically, what you can look at now is the fact that Media Education is actually in the core**

**curriculum. It never was before. It was only an option minority subject taught very much on the periphery" (appendix 1: 647).**

**"...In some ways I do not see Media Studies as concerning itself only with mass media. I see Media Studies as being concerned with minority media, such as independent video, cinema from other cultures" (appendix 1: 648).**

**"...I don't like lining up Media Studies very firmly with one academic tradition. I think [Media Studies] is a hybrid and a lot of different theories feed into it equally" (appendix 1: 650).**

**"...I think it is very dangerous for Media Studies to promote itself through rhetoric and assertion without providing evidence about classroom practice and what goes on" (appendix 1: 651).**

**"...We are actually (the British Film Institute, the B.F.I) about to publish a book called *New Directions in Media Education World-wide.* I am one of the editors. It is an anthology of writing about Media Education in different countries ... the last section of that book contains reviews of Media Education in different parts of the world. (It also contains) lists of the ideal conditions for the development of Media Education" (appendix 1: 655).**

**"...I think that Media Education will not develop successfully unless it has as one of its elements an enthusiasm by teachers themselves. Media Education cannot be imposed in countries where the government has said 'We think there should be Media Education'" (appendix 1: 656).**

## 5.4.1.1 Analytical comment

Respondent A's emphasis upon these two key concepts for her school of thought can be interpreted by reference to her important text *Media Education.* In this text

she explicitly showed her admiration for Williams' work **(e.g., 1958)** as a British scholar pioneer in cultural studies. Like Williams, her concern is with the study of the mass media in their cultural contexts. She had quoted Williams as an introductory premise to her book *Media Education*:-

> **"We need a common culture. Not for the sake of abstraction. But because we shall not survive without it" (Williams, 1958: 304).**

Her strong commitment to Media Education was clearly manifested in her recommendation that Media Education ought to become the cultural framework within which Media Studies, English and other humanities subjects should be studied.

It is necessary to mention that her view of the importance of Media Education is not shared by government education agencies in Britain. The Government has already removed Media Education (1993) from the National Curriculum [2] **(see Chapter 3).**

Respondent C also discussed these central concepts in detail:-

**"[Teaching Media Studies to beginning teachers and to experienced teachers]...depends upon whether we see Media Studies as a specialisation in the school or educational curriculum, or whether we see it as the opposite-a generalisation" (appendix 1: 670).**

**"...All teachers, in my view, should have some exposure to Media Studies" (appendix 1: 671).**

**"In the British context these days [January 1993] Media Studies is often referred to as Media Education across the curriculum" (appendix 1: 671).**

**"In Britain, as in some other countries, Media Studies is now a formal part of the school curriculum. There are designated subject areas, usually called Media Studies, sometimes called Film Studies, sometimes slightly differently called Curriculum Studies, and those areas of work need specialised, qualified, skilled academic servicing by**

**teachers who know what they are doing. What we mean there are teachers who are equipped to teach to levels for pupils in the later stage of secondary schooling, around the age of 16, General Certificate of Secondary Education, and we also need a new wave of teachers to service the specialised Advanced Level examinations at 17/18 years of age in both Film Studies and Media Studies" (appendix 1: 671).**

**"...for certain professional groups a more specialised, intensive training to enable them to teach specialised forms of Media Studies at the official examinable levels of General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)) and O-levels" (appendix 1: 671).**

**"...I would expect a Media Studies teacher in a secondary school to know a lot about the subject. There is a subject [Media Studies] there which has a body of knowledge attached to it: a body of knowledge I understand to involve an awareness of**

**media history in the relative form, an awareness of media theory, a group of theories and ideas that have spread themselves around the history. Substantial engagement with that body of knowledge I would say is the first characteristic I would be (expecting from a Media Studies teacher in a secondary school)" (appendix 1: 672).**

**"...whether or not Media Studies itself embodies a specific pedagogy. Certain writers in the field argue that is the case: that to do Media Studies a very special form of progressivist teaching is required. I guess we associate that principally with the work of Len Masterman [see also Chapter 2]. That may well be true at certain moments in this area. I am not entirely convinced it will be true throughout the teaching of Media Studies. To me that question is still a bit more open. I think the pedagogy of Media Studies involves a whole range of pedagogies. It involves some very traditional, direct teaching. It**

**involves other forms of student-centred learning, and so on" (appendix 1: 672)."**

**I would expect Media Studies teachers to be highly organised, highly professional, highly media literate. I would expect [Media Studies teachers] to know what is going on in media in a contemporary way, and I would expect [Media Studies teachers] to be media competent in terms of using basic media technology, such as it exists in many schools. The technological position is not yet as impressive as it should be and it has to be improved" (appendix 1: 672).**

**"...I've got to say that my first interest in Media Studies has to be educational" (appendix 1: 672).**

**"...The teaching of Media Studies in recent years has actually been very strongly influenced to a very high degree by a whole stream of thinking coming in from political philosophy, coming in from sociology,**

**coming in from theories of society" (appendix 1: 673).**

**"...moral approaches to Media Studies. ...I think morality is an absolutely central issue. It can't be disentangled from political and philosophical questions" (appendix 1: 673).**

**"...Screen theory came along long after the start of Media Studies teaching. Media Studies teaching has been going along very happily since at least 1950" (appendix 1: 674).**

**"...I don't think it can be the be-all and the end-all, for the simple reason that not all Media Education and Media Studies goes on in the classroom. Yes, [Media Education and Media Studies] may go on there. [Media Education and Media Studies] is going to go elsewhere as well, in the family and in the culture at large. Media Education has got to take a large brief. [Media Education] has got to think quite broadly about where things are**

**happening, what it is going to address" (appendix 1: 675).**

**"...Now the job of Media Education, Media Studies, comes in here, because the job of Media Studies and Media Education will be to make that entertainment a little bit firmer, because Media Education is going to come along and say-[Media Education] is going to ask questions of definition. [Media Education] is going to ask about pleasure, for example. What kinds of pleasure get derived?. [Media Education] is going to ask about learning. 'So you think you are learning when you see films about Americans'" (appendix 1: 677).**

**"...so I think Media Studies comes along and puts the pressure on a bit. [Media Studies] says OK, enjoy these things, gain pleasure, gain reassurance, gain whatever it is you subjectively wish for in your mind, and then when you've done that, let's talk a little bit more about what those things are, about**

**why you enjoy them, about what you get from them. At the end of the line, certain exponents of Media Studies will argue that actually by the time you have asked that question about pleasure, you are really attacking or even denying entertainment function of the mass media" (appendix 1: 677).**

## 5.4.1.2 Analytical comment

It has been shown that respondent C focused on the two central concepts 'Media Education' and 'Media Studies' particularly in terms of teaching in secondary schools. Although he referred to both concepts as they relate to the same phenomenon, he defined the concept 'Media Studies' as **"designated subjects".**

Respondent C associated Media Studies with the characteristics of professionally specialist teachers in secondary schools on the one hand and with a certain body of knowledge on the other.

He also highlighted that Media Studies teaching in Britain has recently been very strongly influenced by wider political developments. Respondent C, in addition to the latter, focused on the critical role of Media Education and Media Studies in

assisting students to filter what they perceive from mass media entertainment (e.g., cinema, television). He also considered a key function of both Media Education and Media Studies in defining what is entertainment. In other words, he saw Media Studies and Media Education as gatekeepers for children and students in developing a discourse of their viewing of mass media entertainment.

More importantly, this respondent pinpointed certain linkages between Media Studies and screen theory. [3] He did so as a response to question 5 in the interview which centred around Buckingham's 1990 argument that mass Media Studies have been dominated by certain forms of theory and a relative neglect of classroom applications or practical work. Although respondent C had a sympathy with the criticism Buckingham made in his book *Watching Media Learning*, he disagreed with certain aspects of it.

Respondent C asserted forcefully:-

> **"...Screen theory becomes a kind of villain, the villain of the piece that has done all these terrible things. When you read that introduction [Buckingham's argument] it is very hard to find out what it is that it [screen theory] has done wrong,**

**and I think a longer and more sympathetic examination of screen theory would show that actually it has been incredibly productive of approaches to teaching" (appendix 1: 674).**

He also commended 'screen theory' for its contribution to Media Studies in many ways (e.g., publications), most notably Masterman's two influential books, *Teaching about Television* and *Teaching about the media* in 1980 and 1985 respectively. This respondent held great respect for Masterman, who has been considered by many teachers such as, respondent A and Lusted (1990) as one of the most pioneering scholars of screen theory and of Media Studies.

Respondent B was also concerned to explore the relationship of Media Studies and Media Education:-

**"...There are very few people who do a first degree in Media Studies because [Media Studies] is still a developing subject in higher education. [Media Studies] is developing very rapidly, and also at the upper levels in schools. Media Studies A-level is taking off quite dramatically, so [Media Studies] has**

**become much more popular there. But it is still the case that the majority of people who come here to do Media Studies, either to do an initial teacher training or an in-service training, haven't got that background" (appendix 1: 660).**

**"...in higher education I think it has taken quite a long time for Media Studies to be accepted as a serious subject-as a properly academic subject-but that is now happening quite quickly, I think. There are many more institutions which now have Media Studies [and other related subjects (e.g., Communication Studies, Cultural Studies)]" (appendix 1: 661).**

**"...but it is important to be aware of how the changes in teacher education are affecting the position of a subject like Media Studies. For example, if you took History-teachers who are going to teach History mostly have a first degree in History, whereas teachers going to teach Media**

**Education won't generally have a first degree, so [teachers] need to become aware and learn about [Media Education] as well as learning about how to teach [Media Education]" (appendix 1: 661).**

**"...The distinction I would use is that Media Studies, I would say, is a specialist academic subject which is taught at General Certificate for Secondary Education (GCSE), A-level and in higher education. Media Education, I would say, is where the subject or the study of the media is part of other subjects. It needn't happen within a specialist subject-it can happen within social studies or English or Art or whatever" (appendix 1: 661).**

**"...It seems to be very important as a Media Studies teacher to listen to, and to recognise, student knowledge as important. That is particularly important for media teachers because Media Studies is going to be an area in which students already come with a lot of knowledge. That may be different**

**from the teacher's knowledge but in certain areas it is likely to be more specialised and more in-depth knowledge than the teachers can possibly ever possess" (appendix 1: 661-662).**

**"...Media Studies is a subject which because it has a balance of practical work and theory, or practice and critical study, (Media Studies) is a subject that should allow students to pursue their own interests and enthusiasms. [Media Studies] is the kind of subject which is not going to lend itself to front of class transmission teaching. [Media Studies] is the kind of subject which is going to require a more flexible classroom organisation, and that poses particular kinds of challenges" (appendix 1: 662).**

**"...you will have come up against the debate about Media Education across the curriculum. I think although you have Media Studies as a separate subject, what you would also look for in a media specialist within a school is an ability to work with**

**other teachers in other subject areas: that ability to identify what the aims and objectives of a particular area of study are, whether it be English or History or even Science, and to then think how Media Education can fit into that where these people already use media but how the Media Studies teacher can enable them to use media in a way that is in line with their aims and objectives. It is important just in terms of getting your subject on the map, certainly in secondary schools" (appendix 1: 662).**

**"...Media Education is a political project" (appendix 1: 663).**

**"...it seems to me there is an argument for Media Education as a form of empowerment....What Media Education enables [students] to do is reflect upon their experience" [4] (appendix 1: 663).**

## 5.4.1.3 Analytical comment

This respondent equally connected the importance of teaching Media Studies to beginning teachers and experienced teachers and to the importance of teaching Media Studies to students in schools. He highlighted Media Studies in terms of two types of teacher training: initial and in-service through higher education institutions.

Despite the fact that this respondent continued talking about both concepts 'Media Studies' and 'Media Education', he clarified the concepts when the investigator challenged him to be more specific. He elaborated by defining Media Studies as a specialist subject, while he thought that Media Education was about the study of media. He located Media Education within English or Art or any other related subject.

Respondent B also talked about Media Studies and Media Education in terms of teachers' discourse of teaching. He more significantly attached Media Studies to classroom practice, which will be discussed later under the concept 'classroom practice'.

Finally, it is perhaps appropriate to suggest that this respondent had been influenced by critical approaches such as Masterman's 1980 and 1985 landmark

publications. Although he did not reject Masterman's theoretical approach he believed that there should be more emphasis upon classroom practical work.

Respondent D did not devote so much time to distinguishing between these two central concepts but he made some relevant comments:-

**"...[There are] certain questions about the relationship of Media Studies to the pre-school, infant and junior school child...Screen education has not been notably concerned with developing a coherent approach to Media Studies with children below the secondary level" (appendix 1: 645).**

**"...Must the Media Studies teacher stand on the sidelines until the child is 'formed'?" (appendix 1: 645).**

**"Whether the term should be 'Media Studies' or 'Media Education' is controversial. Just for the sake of argument, the importance of teaching Media Studies to beginning teachers and to experienced**

**teachers as well is also controversial" (appendix 1: 645).**

## 5.4.1.4 Analytical comment

Although this respondent gave limited attention to these two main concepts, he placed Media Studies in a relation to the pre-school infant and junior school child. This was an important observation not raised by the other respondents. Interestingly enough he echoed what Buckingham argued in 1991 (i.e., criticising screen theorists, apparently **Masterman**) for not paying attention to **"a coherent approach to Media Studies with children below the secondary level".** Respondent D had apparently been influenced by the writings of Arten (1961) and Lesser (1977). He also quoted the Educational Director of the Sesame Street series. This respondent stated that:-

> **"...It is surely true that children do not like to be preached at but television can show simple instances of caring, examples of good people in this world who are doing good things for others and for themselves. Perhaps seeing such people at home, on television or**

**wherever is all children need to build their own myths" (appendix 1: 645).**

He mentioned Lesser's book of 1974: *Children and Television.* Coincidentally this respondent himself wrote an article in 1985 titled 'Children's Television: the Germination of Ideology' **(Ferguson, 1985 in Root, 1986: 11. See also, Chapter 2).** Respondent D had also published articles about Media Studies **(e.g., 'Sesame Street: Ideology for the Under 5's 'Screen Education Magazine, 1981, No. 25, and 'Liberal Education, Media Studies and the Concept of Action', Screen Education, 1977, No. 22).**

His contributions to the analysis were significantly different from the other respondents. He emphasised the importance of thinking about early years education in Media Studies. He also focused upon the potential of mass media as a form of moral education.

## 5.4.2 Classroom practice

This central concept emerged as important in the discourse of the respondents and this is not surprising because Media Studies is about, among other things, learning in the classroom. From this perspective, it has to be noted that question 5

**(see appendix 1: 644)** in the interview will be the central focus. This concept was highlighted by the four respondents, in varying degrees, in relation to both concepts 'Media Studies' and 'Media Education'.

## * classroom practice in the context of media studies as a body of knowledge

Respondent B highlighted the notion that teachers ought to respect, discuss and add to the body of knowledge their students come with to the classroom:-

> **"...Media Studies is going to be an area in which students already come with a lot of knowledge. That may be different from the teacher's knowledge but in certain areas it is likely to be more specialised and more in-depth knowledge than the teachers can possibly ever possess. It seems to be very important as a Media Studies teacher to listen to, and to recognise, that knowledge as important" (appendix 1: 662).**

**"The body of knowledge students usually possess about the mass media serves another aspect of classroom practice: ...enabling students to make explicit what they know and reflect upon their own experience of the media which, as I've said, is a very important part of their social experience ... to gain some kind of control of that experience ..." (appendix 1: 663).**

In classroom practice, respondent B believed it was wrong to mistake,

**"...what students already know and understand. It underestimates their existing critical abilities" (appendix 1: 663).**

He also placed his remarks within a Marxist [5] frame of reference when he said:-

**"...a question of what you might call the relations of production, of knowledge, so that what you had certainly in the 70s was an idea that the academics [he referred mainly to Masterman] produced the**

**knowledge and then the teachers looked at what the academics had done and filtered it down to students. Teachers then become a channel for academic theory. That seems to me to privilege academic theory unduly, and also to underprivilege what students and teachers can do" (appendix 1: 664).**

## * classroom practice in the context of Media Studies' practical work

Respondent B described Media Studies in its classroom practical work. He asserted:-

**"...specific to media teaching is really to do with how you manage the classroom. Compared with a lot of other subjects, Media Studies is a subject which, because it has a balance of practical work and theory, or practice and critical study, because it is a subject that should allow students to pursue their own interests and enthusiasms, is the kind of subject which is not going to lend itself to front of**

**class transmission teaching. It is the kind of subject which is going to require a more flexible classroom organisation, and that poses particular kinds of challenges. I'm thinking in particular of when students are pursuing individual project work, which may be their own research projects, for example, where you are doing practical work and students are having to work in a range of different media and have different kinds of requirements. They will also by and large be working in groups, so there are particular challenges that are posed to do with classroom organisation. I think it requires somebody who is able to be flexible at that level, but is also going to be quite rigorous and efficient in terms of how they organise their classrooms" (appendix 1: 662).**

Respondent B also emphasised that Media Education in classroom practice:-

**"...may involve other things, like kids acquiring practical skills, or what you might call aesthetic**

**qualities-for example in practical work, design involves developing skills to do with artistic expression" (appendix 1: 663).**

In his view, classroom practice of Media Education should enable students:-

**"...not only to become more effective and critical users, but also more effective and critical producers, or at least have that potential to become media producers..." (appendix 1: 663).**

This was central to respondent B's understanding of the field:-

**"...I am arguing for two things really. Firstly, for the importance of practical work within media teaching, but also for the importance of looking at classroom practice. I'm not then arguing that the theory is irrelevant. What I'm arguing is that these things should be brought together. I'm not arguing for practice for the sake of practice. I'm arguing for practice that informs theory, and theory that**

**informs practice. In the same way I am not arguing for classroom practice simply for its own sake. What I'm arguing is for people to think through classroom practice in terms of academic theory, but also the other side of that is to say, well, academic theory needs to be asked 'what is its purpose?', 'what is its relevance?' and in particular, 'what is its relevance to students?' My argument would be that you need to look at what students themselves, that is, children in schools, can generate in their own theory. The classrooms are the places where theories get generated. They are not simply places where theories get disseminated or transmitted, and those theories then come from somewhere else" (appendix 1: 664).**

## 5.4.2.1 Analytical comment

* **classroom practice in the context of media studies as a body of knowledge**

Respondent B signified the importance of students themselves as an important source of knowledge about the mass media. This notion of students' activity learning results in a participative interactive relationship between students and their Media Studies teachers.

Although respondent B did not state specifically the knowledge about the mass media which students possess, he apparently referred to pop music, films about adventure, violence, thrillers, horror movies and probably sex, tabloid newspapers, soap operas, sports programmes, etc. which mainly students have as their source of knowledge about the mass media. Respondent B placed a great deal of emphasis on the need for teachers to recognise that body of knowledge which is different from their own, and which is more specialised in certain areas.

This notion of activity learning among other notions of participative and interactive relationships between equal partners during the teaching process within classroom practice, seems to be a shift away from authoritarian notions of teaching. This traditional approach sees students as tabula rasa and the role of teachers is to transmit knowledge. Accordingly, this approach deals with students as mere recipients, negative and passive, who come to the classroom with no knowledge of their own. Thus it undermines the students' natural ability, their existing critical capability, and neglects their knowledge and intellect. Respondent

B rejected all of the latter assumptions. He also criticised what he regarded as the dominance of theorists over classroom practitioners in Media Education.

He accused some theorists of assuming superiority of understanding over both teachers and students. He stressed the importance of teachers and students as producers of knowledge about the mass media in democratic, interactive and participative relationships. In these approaches, respondent B echoed Murdock and Phelps' 1973 study on *Mass Media and the Secondary School* in which they called on teachers to understand and use their students' body of knowledge about the mass media. He was also influenced by Hall and Whannel's 1964 publication *Popular Art* in which they called on teachers to recognise their students' knowledge of the mass media as a medium of achieving a successful and constructive teaching relationship.

## * classroom practice in the context of media studies as practical work

This represented the core thinking of respondent B. Most significantly, he saw the classroom as an environment in which students are inspired by their self-directed learning and the fact that they themselves and their teachers are in fact participative resources of media knowledge. In these classrooms they generate and

work out their own theories and apply them to practice, rather than the classroom becoming a place in which academic theory gets disseminated and transmitted.

This notion of every student as 'media theorist' leads to other significant and important notions. The first is that students by doing the latter become critical users of the mass media by reflecting on their experience. The second is that students become the potential critical producers of the mass media. Respondent B emphasised the importance of 'positive', 'active' and 'creative' notions which interpret the basic principles of education.

In analysing his account about classroom practice it is clear that he gave fundamental importance to notions of students' critical use of the media and students as critical producers of the media.

Respondent B referred to the importance of a democratic setting for Media Education in which both students and teachers display their skills and grounded understandings. Therefore, respondent B outlined the definition of creative classroom practice as a place where students can embark on either individual or collective practical work such as video production in a critical and creative manner.

* **classroom practice in the context of media studies as a body of knowledge**

Respondent C emphasised the notion that teachers:-

> **"...are going to need to know about those media ... predominantly television, film, popular music, radio, the press ... Professionally they are going to come into contact with them through the students they teach, who are going to be dramatically informed by the students' experience of those things, inside as well as outside the school" (appendix 1: 673).**

In his view teachers ought to:-

> **"...understand that body of knowledge in pedagogic terms-that is to say, a teacher who is able to interpret the complexities of that body of knowledge in line with the curriculum needs of given ranges of students. We are talking about primary kids at the**

**early stages, secondary, or end of secondary students. A pedagogic awareness means the interpretation of the body of knowledge. It also means being very open and responsive to what we mean by pedagogy itself: modes of teaching" (appendix 1: 672).**

## * 'classroom practice' in the context of 'media studies' as practical work

Respondent C emphasised the importance of a teacher's own media competence:-

**"...I would expect [teachers of Media Studies during the classroom practical work] to be media competent in terms of using basic media technology, such as it exists in many schools" (appendix 1: 672).**

But at the same time he stressed the importance of the aesthetic dimension:-

**"...For example, the aesthetic position referred to here has dominated much of the work in film studies, very rightly, because as we know, film and cinema are aesthetically extraordinarily rich as forms" (appendix 1: 673).**

## 5.4.2.2 Analytical comment

Respondent C was concerned mainly with the notion 'pedagogy'. He raised the necessity for a Media Studies teacher to be pedagogically aware of ways in which to interpret the body of knowledge students have about the mass media. The explanations may involve matters such as the background of producing a particular film, the key issues in the film, analysis of the 'messages' the film carried etc.

The respondent highlighted a central notion of 'being competent' as a Media Studies teacher in terms of using basic media technology. This notion is central to classroom practice, for Media Studies in practice needs teachers who are capable of using technologies such as television, video, video camera etc. This view reflected in particular his interest in the development of media technology. Respondent C constructed a notion of the effective Media Education teacher as both technically competent and aesthetically aware.

## * classroom practice in the context of Media Studies as a body of knowledge

Respondent A urged teachers to media-educate themselves in order to participate with their students:-

> **"...All teachers ... ought to have an element of Media Education teaching to ensure that when they are using media or asking the students to look at evidence for inspiration or whatever kind of material they are looking at, they bring a fairly consistent set of critical attitudes to that task" (appendix 1: 646).**

In the view of respondent A, Media Studies' classroom practice enables children to:-

> **"...make evaluations of what they perceive on the television, place it in context and relate it to other texts, to think what possibilities there might be for it**

**to be different, to think what kind of pleasure it makes available ... I think children should be alerted to all the possibilities of the media, not just with what they watch anyway ..." (appendix 1: 647-648).**

*** classroom practice in the context of media studies as practical work**

In answering question 5 in the interview respondent A had agreed with Buckingham's criticism of screen theorists:-

> **"...I would want to add that I think it is very dangerous for Media Studies to promote itself through rhetoric and assertion without providing evidence about classroom practice ..." (appendix 1: 651).**

## 5.4.2.3 Analytical comment

Respondent A highlighted a very interesting notion 'the critical role of Media Studies teachers'. Working in a major cultural institution this respondent was

concerned, among other major themes, with the critical analysis of cultural phenomena. One dimension of this was to relate what children perceive on television, for example, to the texts they learn from in the classroom.

She consistently argued against traditional criticisms that modern mass media influence is harmful in terms of the basics of literacy and literature **(see chapters 2 and 3).** In general, respondent A had very little to say about classroom practice except that she agreed with Buckingham's criticisms of its relative neglect in Media Studies. There is an obvious reason for her relatively shorter contribution on the concept 'classroom practice'. Respondent A teaches at a major cultural institution concerned with the study of media. Thus, she was more concerned about Media Education and Media Studies from broader cultural perspectives.

The other respondents taught at a major teacher educational institute and therefore their stronger focus upon classroom practice was to be expected.

## * classroom practice in its historic perspective

Respondent D dealt with this concept from a historic perspective rooted in the classroom practice debate of the 1960s:-

**"The 1960s also saw the development of the Humanities Curriculum Project which was more explicitly concerned with the discussion at the secondary level of problematic phenomena whether personal or universal. The general approach of the project was mildly daring and to many teachers it did seem as though genuinely progressive steps were being taken. Years later the problem of motivation has not been solved, indeed many would say that it has become more acute. The Pandora's Box which 'the curriculum of the News of the World' offered has led nowhere. Children are no longer impressed by a teacher who is willing to discuss sex and violence with them" (appendix 1: 645).**

In his view teachers during the 1960s:-

**"encouraged children to undertake basic content-analysis exercises using the daily newspapers. Such exercises, though they showed how little *The Times* concentrated on scandal and sensationalism and**

**how much the 'popular press' did, seldom raised issues which challenged the way things were..." (appendix 1: 645).**

**"...The situation in relation to the study of human relationships through film was much healthier. The work of people like Jim Kitses genuinely offered the chance for young people to discuss, at one remove, the problems of adolescents" (appendix 1: 645. See also chapters 3, 1 and 2 respectively).**

In responding to Buckingham's criticism of the screen theory of the 1970s and about the domination of mass Media Studies by certain forms of theory, respondent D observed that:-

**"...Screen education has not been notably concerned with developing a coherent approach to Media Studies with children below the secondary level. There is a need for detailed analyses of various children's programmes" (appendix 1: 645).**

**"...classroom practice requires a teacher who possesses a narrative approach which means the coherent sequencing of events across time and space ... 'narrative' is a central concept in Media Studies..." (appendix 1: 645).**

## 5.4.2.4 Analytical comment

Respondent D highlighted the crucial central concept of the 'narrative' approach in teaching Media Studies. This respondent's concern with analysing mass media texts by means of the narrative approach is echoed by many writers such as **Alvarado Gutch and Wollen (1987).** This approach is seen to be an effective tool for helping students to analyse certain media 'texts' (e.g., BBC 1's coverage of Bosnia), and subsequently it enables them to generate their own texts.

Implicit in this view is the idea that the narrative approach in media teaching provides students with the critical ability to understand, for instance, why British television consistently focuses on the notion that Saddam is a 'murderer', a 'massacrer' etc. and why it ignores other issues. Therefore viewing television 'narratively' enables students to understand the relationship between media texts and their own social experience.

## 5.4.3 Being participative

This concept was central to the thinking of all the respondents and it is obviously opposed to authoritarian modes of education by transmission. It is perhaps crucially important to note that while the respondents did not use the exact term very frequently they highlighted it in a variety of ideas, theories and expressions.

> **"...it is the role of teachers to enable children to participate fully in their own culture-their own culture includes media..." (appendix 1: 647).**

> **"...An effective teacher is one who has a good dynamic relationship with students, who has at least workable theories of how they are going to learn ... who understands students ... who is open to possibilities that may come up in the course of teaching" (appendix 1: 648).**

> **"...for someone like me who doesn't want to control people and know what goes on in their heads..." (appendix 1: 652).**

**"...Yes. It depends what kind of educator you are. If you have notions of education that are very hard, rigorous and authoritarian, television is probably going to be a bit of a dangerous medium..." (appendix 1: 652).**

## 5.4.3.1 Analytical comment

Respondent A stressed the notion that teachers must not cut children off from their lived culture in which the mass media play a crucial key role. The latter notion can be manifested in another even more important notion that in the view of respondent A teachers ought to deal with their pupils and students as active respondents in the teaching and learning process. Accordingly, this respondent defined desirable media teaching as democratic rather than authoritative.

This particular notion was first emphasised by the 1977 International Film and Television Council (IFTC) which met under the *UNESCO's* supervision in Paris.

The council urged all nations to promote Media Education at all educational levels, including higher and further education. *UNESCO's* view was that such education would enable pupils and students to select and analyse mass media as vehicles of information and certain ideological messages in particular.

Finally, it is perhaps important to underline this respondent's overriding concern about the importance of popular culture in education. This has always been controversial and the subject of long historical debates. For instance, Plato eliminated poets as a popular culture of his time, from his teaching curriculum, for he and other scholars of his time considered both poetry and novels to be frivolous, time-wasting, and even corrupting.

As has already been stated in chapter 1, the mid-nineteenth century cheap shows and theatre were accused of having a corrupting influence on the young. In the 20th century in the same vein, cinema, jazz music, radio and now television have been framed as harmful and corrupting to young people **(Kumar, 1989: 38).**

It is possible to interpret respondent A's views as a rejection of moral panic **(see for example, appendix 1: 650-651).** She was concerned therefore about government control of the curriculum in the 1990s which was excluding popular culture from the school curriculum. Respondent A emphasised that such exclusion would lead to a form of cultural deprivation for all children and young people.

Respondent B also emphasised the importance of a participative culture in teaching:-

**"...the media are an important element in people's lives and what goes on within society is something that one would talk about or teach about in the same way as one teaches about any other aspect of social life..." (appendix 1: 659).**

**"...Any effective teacher (should) listen to students and take on and attempt to understand students' perspectives" (appendix 1: 661).**

He also extended this notion to the idea of participation with other teachers:-

**"...Although you have Media Studies as a separate subject, what you would also look for in a media specialist within a school is an ability to work with other teachers in other subject areas: that ability to identify what the aims and objectives of a particular area of study are, whether it be English or History, or even Science, and to then think how Media Education can fit into that ..."(appendix 1: 662).**

He also held a view of the learner as theorist:-

> **"...My argument would be that you need to look at what students themselves, that is, children in schools, can generate by their own theory" (appendix 1: 664).**

## 5.4.3.2 Analytical comment

Respondent B emphasised the notion that both teachers and students are partners who engage in an equal relationship in which they learn from each other in participative fashion. In other words, students come to the classroom with ideas, information, etc. which they have acquired from their favourite media. Teachers come to the classroom with information and ideas which are mostly different from their students' considering the age and areas of interests among other factors.

Accordingly, the teaching and learning process becomes more interesting and exciting and consequently very productive if they share their collective knowledge. Respondent B also developed the important idea that learners had their own 'theory'. This is a potentially radical concept because it opposes the idea that learners simply receive theory from other people (e.g., academics, media experts

etc.). It stresses that everyone has the capacity to generate theory in Media Education.

Respondent C saw participative work as part of a general education for citizenship:-

**"...outside their working day teachers are general citizens, and part of the work I do with them provides them with knowledge and attitudes that they will find useful more generally" (appendix 1: 673).**

In his view that Media Education:-

**"...is going to go on elsewhere as well, in the family and in the culture at large ... it has got to think quite broadly about where things are happening, what it is going to address, and there has got to be a more interactive relationship with the classroom, the pupils, the teacher and the television programme" (appendix 1: 675).**

### 5.4.3.3 Analytical comment

Respondent C dealt with the 'being participative' concept from three angles. From the first, he expected his students to be participative in learning Media Education because this would also prepare them as citizens for participative roles to play within their society. Secondly, he emphasised the wider value of participative interaction in Media Education. This had the potential to influence life beyond the classroom and the school (i.e., the capacity to extend to other social provinces e.g., the family). Thirdly, this respondent highlighted the historic tradition of participation between teachers and students in British Media Education classroom practice which could be traced back to the 1950s through the legacy of the Society of Film Teachers **(see, for evidence appendix 1: 674).**

Respondent D urged for content-analysis of children programmes:-

> **"...There is a need for detailed analyses of various children's programmes such as Play school ... The degree to which such work will have to be undertaken on behalf of children rather than with their active participation is crucial and problematic.**

**One of the reasons for this is that young children find it very difficult to situate themselves in relation to the vast media input which they face, without some kind of guidance. Most of the guidance which they receive at the moment comes from their peers ..." (appendix 1: 645).**

## 5.4.3.4 Analytical comment

Respondent D recognised the importance of trying to involve young children in a participative way in the discussion of children's television programmes. At the same time he recognised their need for 'guidance'.

There is evidence that young children can be critical of what they are watching and therefore there is potential for developing a critical Media Education with young children as well as with older students. At this stage however it can be noted that Media Education for young children is still relatively undeveloped as a field.

## 5.4.4 Media imperialism

This central concept emerged as one of the most crucial concepts. It was used by the respondents to refer to the question of exporting American media, most notably cinema, television and pop music. The issues raised were the effects of American culture world-wide, with especial reference to cultural effects in the United Kingdom and likely effects in the State of Qatar. According to the Open University's publication *Mass Communication in cross-cultural contexts: the case of the Third World:-*

> **"There exists ample material to substantiate the thesis of a considerable one-way dissemination and export of media-related technology, values and content from a small handful of countries to all others, and that this occurs on such a scale as to place severe restraints on the likelihood of adaptation of new media systems to the purposes of indigenous cultural expressions or demand for such expression. The economic advantages of dependence on imported US television fare in many countries, for example, decreases whenever opportunity exists for fostering local production resources and talent; in some cases broadcast**

**systems would not exist unless a substantial diet of imported programming was available (Open University, 1977: 12).**

These notions of cultural exportation are also expressed by the respondents. Respondent D elaborated the idea of 'media imperialism' in relation to the 'Sesame Street' American series as an influential source:-

**"...There are hundreds of programmes in the 'Sesame Street' series and they work together to provide the young with ideological enrichment such as Kermit's song. As one learns the morality of 'Sesame Street', one becomes increasingly reconciled with one's lot. Whether seen in Latin American countries, in Qatar or in Britain, the cultural imperialism which 'Sesame Street' peddles is equally soporific" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent D criticised the American Children's Television Workshop in New York for the hidden messages in 'Sesame Street':-

**"But what was the message which the children's Television Workshop wanted to put across with (Kermit's) song? Perhaps that it's not so bad being black or brown or yellow. But as children soon learn, it's not easy being black, brown or yellow. They are the colours of the oppressed, the exploited, the second class citizen. Young children know that. But when it's all you can be, why wonder. Be what you are. Be proud. Behave. Learn the alphabet. Count to ten. Do not fill yourself with fury at the injustice and misery which is in front of your nose day after day. Be like the Muppets. Be simply good" (appendix 1: 645).**

He also criticised the educational role of the American children's Television Workshop by stating that:-

**"...the Children's Television Workshop thought that 'deprived' children were very backward indeed. The overall effect of such an approach, irrespective of the intentions of the educator, is to structure and**

**legitimise under-teaching. Minds become under-occupied and in the end the child is taught to under-achieve" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent D went on criticising the effect of the American 'mass media imperialism' via the means of the Children's Television Workshop in Latin America:-

**"...An article by Mattelart and Waksman discusses the Children's Television Workshop production 'Sesame Street' in Latin America. It also raises certain questions about the relationship of Media Studies to the pre-school, infant and junior school child. There is very little work available in this area and the article serves to highlight the role of media imperialism in relation to the education of the very young" (appendix 1: 645).**

He explained further by reviewing a Latin American view on the invasion of the American 'mass media imperialism':-

**"...Mattelart sees the approach of 'Sesame Street' as an instrument of media imperialism, substituting entertainment for the provision of basic skills in literacy and numeracy" (appendix 1: 645).**

### 5.4.4.1 Analytical comment

This respondent focused specifically on one tool of media imperialism, the American children's series 'Sesame Street'. Many children around the world have experienced in one form or another a portion of this popular programme. Having said that, it must be remembered that issues of 'media imperialism' are not a new issue. Such questions go back to the beginning of this century, precisely to the rise of Hollywood films.

In Britain many writers such as **Reed (1950), Thompson (1965)** and others warned against the manipulative role of media imperialism through the exporting and popularity of American cultural art (e.g., cinema and pop music, especially 'Elvis music'). Media imperialism will continue as a major challenge in the future as long as the huge companies in the United States of America maintain their market.

The critical issue which respondent D raised was the likely effect of media imperialism as channelled through the 'innocent' network of children's television programmes. Moreover, this respondent highlighted the notion that the producers of the American series 'Sesame Street' have_exploited the presumed innocence of children by the most assumed effective instrument of American 'media imperialism', children's television. In other words, his view was that these producers hid the 'poison in the honey', as it is said in Arabia. Such children's television could spread the American ideological myths (e.g., superiority of the white person and of the American nation). Respondent C discussed media imperialism and its effects upon British culture:-

> **"...Britain is a very good example of this. Britain, in many respects, is another state of the United States when it comes to media culture. We have always been an outpost of the United States where media culture is concerned, in two respects: first, in relation to cinema, where there is one simple logistical problem. The reason is, there is no such thing as British cinema (there are British films, but on the whole there is no longer anything you can call British cinema)" (appendix 1: 680).**

**"...As far as television is concerned, as you say, television has been more creative in a way because the costs are lower, the economy is different where television is concerned, and there have been very strong protection measures to protect the percentages of foreign programming material. I think it is 14%-I think that is right. The permitted amount of imported material to be shown over a given period of transmission is 14%. In the era of deregulation that itself may be eroded, I don't know" (appendix 1: 680).**

**"...Therefore, there is a problem here which is not just about the mass media, I think. It's probably about the size of a country and the economy of a country in relation to dominant world powers. Qatar is relatively small. Britain is a bit bigger but is still small. By any standards North America is going to set the power relations in this respect. There are two kinds of response, I think. One is to create a negotiated cultural relationship with the**

**United States, which is to accept that situation and to say, well, in itself this is no bad thing. We enjoy American movies. We will negotiate in relation to American culture and national culture. That is one possibility. I think that is what has happened in Britain. The other possibility, which I think raises its own problems, is the desperate attempt to create a very highly designed version of national culture, which some of the smaller nation states around the world are currently moving towards. One understands why that happens. It is happening in Britain at the moment, in Scotland and Wales. It has been happening in Ireland for a long time. The creation of a strict national cultural image-I'm not convinced that is the solution. Wherever that has happened around the world it has tended to lead to a certain amount of inwardness and a certain kind of - almost a bogus sense that we are different and we are not like the (people) over there. In the spirit of internationalism I think one has to be open" (appendix 1: 680-681).**

**"...Satellite transmission, you see, just opens a whole new ball game because unless the state introduces some draconian legislation then there is no protection (if one wants to use the word 'protection')" (appendix 1: 681).**

**"...So this is a whole new dimension in relation to media imperialism. It is no longer simply in relation to North American culture because the stuff going around Europe now by satellite isn't particularly North American. It is being exchanged across a lot of boundaries. I think there has got to be some balance between developing national culture, but nonetheless a national culture which is reasonably outward looking, if that is not a contradiction in terms. American material, where traditional transmission systems are concerned, is always going to be irresistibly cheap. The country that has a population of only 500,000 is going to find that rights on American material are going to be so cheap: one hour of 'I love Lucy' is going to cost so**

**little money to buy that the possibility of filling one hour of television with home-produced material" (appendix 1: 681-682).**

## 5.4.4.2 Analytical comment

As far as the current American film domination in Britain is concerned, this respondent highlighted the notion that because Britain (and Qatar) are small countries in comparison with the United States they lacked viable markets even if they have good independent cinema. Therefore, he called on both countries to create **a 'negotiated cultural relationship'** with American cultural production.

This is an important idea but whilst this could be applicable to Britain, for it shares many features in common with the United States, a country such as Qatar does not. Qatar is mainly characterised by Islamic values, therefore such a relationship with American culture is far more problematic. There have been and there are political reasons which inhibit such a relationship between Qatari culture and American cultural media. This will be examined in more detail in the last **chapter.**

Respondent B explained the issues which surround the concept 'media imperialism':-

**"You will be familiar with all the debates about media imperialism. I think one of the things that happened in that debate is that there has been a shift in recent years away from the idea that American media exert this extraordinary ideological control over the world. That view has been criticised now. What we have now is that it tends to underestimate developing countries. It underestimates the intelligence of people in those countries and also their ability to take on and use American media in their own ways and for their own purposes. Recent cross-cultural audience research, there's a book called *The Export of Meaning* by Leibes and Katz, which is about the international reception of 'Dallas', there you find that different national or ethnic groups make sense of this quintessentially American ideological product in very, very different ways. Some groups will be**

**explicitly critical of the programme. Other groups will accentuate certain things and ignore other things. They will make sense of it and use it in very different ways, but the idea that the programme contains a single ideological position or an ideology which is then imposed on viewers is one that I think has to be abandoned. What you have to look at is the diversity of ways in which people in different national cultures make sense of American television or American media. That is one point" (appendix 1: 668).**

**"...Nevertheless, I do think there are institutional questions to do with Western control (particularly American) over institutions of media, and particularly of news media. For example, the big international news agencies are by and large going to be controlled by the West, by America and by Europe. That is significantly going to affect the kind of information that is available to you. That is certainly an issue" (appendix 1: 668).**

**"...There are also economic questions, which are the case in Europe as well, in that it is much cheaper to buy in American television products than to produce your own products. That is one of the big issues around at the moment in children's television in that it is much cheaper to buy American cartoons than for British television companies to produce their own home-grown drama programmes. That inevitably means that things that are nationally specific or even specific to particular cultural groups within a nation are going to drop out of the picture. They are not going to be represented. So I think that is an issue as well. There are very definite, genuine reasons for concern, but the answers to them are not simple" (appendix 1: 668).**

### 5.4.4.3 Analytical comment

Respondent B highlighted a very interesting notion that is 'the export of meaning' which is manifested by a series like 'Dallas'. 'Dallas' is perhaps one of the most popular forms of American media in which its producers, for the sake of

international consumption, attempted throughout the series to represent American family values. However, in some parts of the world, although these television products are so popular, they are viewed with caution.

For example, in some Latin American approaches to American 'media imperialism' **(i.e., those mainly pioneered by Gutierrez of Costa Rica, Matta of Chile and Lima of Brazil)**, there has been a concern with developing a:-

> **"critical national audience so the foreign, notably American, cultural models are rejected and the ideological invasion by the transnational power structure halted" (Matta, 1981: 96).**

Matta, the Latin American writer from Chile wrote in 1988 an influential article, published in Development Dialogue entitled 'A Model for Democratic Communication: a proposition':-

> **"in order to raise educational levels for a better understanding of the communication process and to create true participation based upon adequate social awareness" (Matta, 1981: 79).**

In relation to other cultures, Kakkar (1979) argued in a psycho-media study that Western, most notably American, models of socialisation (e.g., American film series such as 'Dallas') [6] are:-

> **"necessarily foreign to the Indian tradition that did not have to overcome an original burden of rejection of children" (Kakkar, 1979: 13).**

Additionally, the analyses of the 'Sesame Street' series by the Latin American writers, according to respondent D, showed that the main ideology planted in the series was the superiority of the white man among other things (see also the analytical comment on respondent D about media imperialism).

Respondent B also referred to a recent and important publication about the exportation of American culture to other nations, which has been also commented on by the Open University.

The authors are Liebes and Katz and its title, *The Export of Meaning*. This book is very relevant to this study. It is an important study of cross-cultural readings of 'Dallas'. Liebes and Katz have chosen the United States of America, Israel and

Japan as the focus of a comparative cultural study into the influence of 'Dallas'. It is interesting that Israel was chosen as a representative nation. The authors argue that:-

> **"Israel itself is something of a global village, and 'Dallas' was a big hit. In the environs of Jerusalem, [Al-kods in Islamic terms] we watched the weekly episode in the homes of Arab veteran settlers from Morocco, recent arrivals from Russia, and second-generation Israelis in kibbutzim-Dallas fans all" (Liebes & Katz, 1990: preface).**

Liebes and Katz reinforce the point made by respondents A, B, C and D (see their comments on the concept of 'media imperialism' cited above) that American film producers are concerned mainly with exporting the American cultural facets to other countries. The aim is, of course a combination of political and economic virtues **(see, for example, appendix 1: 667-669).**

The authors also reinforce the points made by respondent C in this chapter and respondent CQ in chapter 6 about the importance of the transmission of American popular culture through American media production **(see respondents' account on**

**media imperialism shown above and see chapter 6).** 'Dallas' is a particularly influential example. As the authors note:-

> **"American popular culture travels the world with ease. Films, pop music, fast food, [junk food] jeans, and American advertising have taken hold almost everywhere, in spite of the objections of patriots of the indigenous heritage" (Liebes and Katz, 1990: 3).**

Liebes and Katz (1990) argue:-

> **"The name 'Dallas' in the 1980's became a metaphor for the conquest of the world by an American television serial. 'Dallas' signifies an international congregation of viewers (one of the largest in history), gathered once weekly to follow the saga of the Ewing dynasty-its interpersonal relations and business affairs" (Liebes and Katz, 1990: 5).**

## 5.4.5 Entertainment

Whether the function of mass media, notably television, is entertainment or something else, is very arguable. As has been shown in chapter 2 Howitt (1982) claimed that the main function of the mass media is entertainment **(see chapter 2).** In chapter 1 Thompson (1965) sharply complained that every value students learn at school is destroyed by the mass media **(see chapter 1).** He was referring to the American Hollywood films' popularity in the United kingdom. As will be seen in the following pages the respondents, most notably respondent C and respondent B emphasised the educational role of the mass media's entertainment particularly television comedy and American cinema.

These 1990s views (the respondents gave their accounts at the beginning of 1993) are in total contrast with those of Thompson (1965) and of Howitt (1982) to an extent. This central concept and central meaning has always been fundamental in discussions about the role of mass media in society. Although only two respondents elaborated their views on this, their accounts were detailed and rich, and they deserve to be fully reported. Respondent C stressed the importance of defining the term:-

**"The word seems to me to involve a lot of different things, some of them absolutely and crucially ideological things. So, for example, if entertainment involves pleasure, and it certainly does, the immediate question then is 'What does pleasure mean?' If entertainment means showing interest in things. Or if the question then is 'Which things are interesting and which are not?" (appendix 1: 676).**

**"...There is a long social history of the ways in which societies give themselves pleasure. They give themselves pleasure by various means. They give themselves pleasure by organising social life in certain ways. They give themselves pleasure by producing certain representation systems. They give themselves pleasure by evolving certain religious beliefs, and so on. The mass media come along at the end of a very long line of development which is very much based, beginning with cave paintings - coming along the line, coming into**

**theatre, coming along to the audio-visual media. All those things are entertaining" (appendix 1: 677).**

**"It just so happens that 'entertainment' covers a multitude of different ideological, political, psychological, aesthetic issues (that's the other question). I find the cinema entertaining because I love watching big pictures moving on a screen and hearing fantastic quality Dolby stereo. That is entertaining, but at the same time, what entertains me about the cinema is watching social representations being worked out. When I go and watch an American film, I learn something. You get a certain representation of American society. So I think we learn as well" (appendix 1: 677).**

Respondent C related these issues to Media Education:-

**"Now the job of Media Education, Media Studies, comes in here, because the job of Media Studies and Media Education will be to make that entertainment**

**a little bit finer, because Media Education is going to come along and say - it is going to ask questions of definition. It is going to ask about pleasure, for example. What kinds of pleasure get derived? It is going to ask about learning. 'So you think you are learning when you see films about Americans. What kinds of things do you learn?' 'So you think you learn something about human nature when you see human dramas on film. Well, what kinds of representation do you see and understand?' At the end of the line, certain exponents of Media Studies will argue that actually by the time you have asked that question about pleasure, you are really attacking or even denying the entertainment function of the mass media..." (appendix 1: 677-678).**

Respondent C believed that Media Education might be used in pleasure denying and puritanical ways. He believed that this was particularly so in relation to certain approaches from the Left:-

"Critics coming in from the Left school of thought, critics of the Marxist tradition, will argue that the entertainment functions of the mass media are the functions of deception. They will argue that in a capitalist society the entertainment function of the mass media exists to deceive the citizens about their true role in the society. They will operate a classic Marxist formula that in bourgeois society we understand things in terms of false consciousness and that the media exist as a very important primary mechanism for deception and delusion. To a certain extent that is a very important and attractive thesis because of course it simplifies life enormously. If you can believe that mass media simply deceive and dupe people, then it is very easy to say that their entertainment function is a sham, it is an illusion. But again, life isn't as simple as that. The complexity for mass media exists in the fact that they do all these things. They do give very profound forms of pleasure. They do offer profound visions of the world which we would have no other means of

**obtaining. I have no other means of seeing all the things that are going on in the world unless they are represented to me by the media. At the same time we know that the media are typically controlled either by state government or by dominant business concerns which inevitably give them certain preferred inflexions. So they are not innocent. They have very specific social characters. Thinking about the entertainment role means thinking about those inflexions as well" (appendix 1: 677-678).**

### 5.4.5.1 Analytical comment

Respondent C defined the concept 'entertainment' in relation to the concept of 'pleasure' and raised interesting points about the potential puritanism of Media Education. He traced the generation of pleasure in media history from as early as the days of theatre **(see Chapter 1)** to the age of audio-visual media. He described entertainment as a vehicle of a variety of ideological, political, psychological, aesthetic stances. He in particular highlighted the cinema as a powerful instrument of entertainment in many senses.

This respondent also reviewed certain Marxist approaches of criticising entertainment in Western media as mainly deception. He pointed out the complexities which Media Education has to face. Entertainment can be deception but it is not simply that. Students need to think critically about the various functions of entertainment.

Respondent B also stressed the entertainment/education relation:-

> **"Well, I don't believe that people don't learn from entertainment. It seems to me that people always learn from entertainment, even if that learning is a kind of reinforcement of what they already knew, but it's still a kind of learning. Let's take a situation comedy like 'Only Fools and Horses'. The reason why we are able to make sense of that programme, the reason why it is funny, is because of a whole set of social knowledge that we already have, which may be a set of social stereotypes about the working class or Cockneys living in London, or about gender roles, and so on. But in watching that programme that knowledge is reinforced, it's changed or it's**

**added to, or whatever. There is a real kind of learning process going on there. So although I believe the BBC Charter says 'education, information and entertainment', the distinction between those categories is very blurred. There is a problem with using the word entertainment, particularly as you said it, 'sheer entertainment', as if this was somehow mindless, and didn't involve thinking or learning of any kind. It seems to me it does" appendix 1: 666-667).**

He emphasised the particular challenges of working with television in Media Education:-

**"...Now I think when it comes to television, the point is essentially that television is primarily seen as a leisure technology. It is primarily used for that reason, for entertainment, for relaxation, and it is used only secondarily to inform yourself about the world. What that means is that when you are wanting to use television to educate, you have to**

**somehow break the way in which it is usually consumed by people. In schools children are used to seeing television as putting their feet up, relaxing, which is absolutely fine. There is a danger of being too puritanical and saying every use of television has to be a kind of work and it is only valid if people work at it. Nevertheless, if their main use of television is for relaxation, if you then want to use television to educate, you have to disrupt that expectation, to make them look at it in a different kind of way" (appendix 1: 665-666).**

### 5.4.5.2 Analytical comment

This respondent rejected the notion of 'sheer entertainment'. People in his view learn from entertainment, even if that entertainment reinforces aspects of people's social life they already know. He pointed out how difficult it is to use television effectively in Media Education and reinforced the point made by Respondent C about the dangers of puritanism in the classroom.

## 5.4.6 Realism

This was also a central concept and meaning in discussions about the nature of the mass media. Does television, for instance, reflect reality or does it distort some aspects of it? This concept was expressed by the respondents as one of the areas of concern to them. Respondent B has elaborated by saying:-

**"I suppose the obvious answer is yes, they (mass media) are mirrors of society, but they are distorting mirrors. What the media show will always inevitably be partial, although what the media show, if it is going to make sense to us, must connect with what we already know about the world. If the media simply showed us lies or chose things that were simply untrue, then we would be unlikely to believe it and therefore it would be pleasurable and we would therefore be unlikely to watch it. The media must to some extent reflect our own experience or must connect with our own perceptions of the world if we are going to be able to make sense of it at all. Nevertheless, of course the media are not a neutral window on the world.**

**There is a danger of assuming that there is a way of representing reality in a proper way. There is no such thing as a mirror that will simply show us the way the world is. Documentary news is inevitably partial, selective, and takes on some points of view and neglects others, and so on. That is unavoidable" (appendix 1: 667).**

## 5.4.6.1 Analytical comment

This respondent pointed out that the media cannot be 'a neutral window on the world'. There will always be partial representation of 'reality', not to mention fundamental debates about what 'reality' is. However, the attempt to produce a balanced approximation to 'reality' is always more difficult where there is strong control of the media by state, church, religion or party.

The Western media news coverage of the war against Iraq, for instance, did not show us the suffering inside Iraq as much as they showed us what happened to Kuwait **(see appendix 2: 694).** This notion is a reflection on respondent B's views that news coverage in the British mass media is partial which means that it

focuses on some aspects of the occurrence and neglects major aspects for political purposes.

According to respondent AT in chapter 7 the mass media reinforce the ignorance about the status quo **(see appendix 2: 693).** This is an example of the way that news coverage in the West is partial and selective, reflecting certain things but neglecting others. This is inevitable, as long as the state or some other agency situates itself as the main gatekeeper of media transmission. However, these media phenomena are applicable to many countries in the world. In the developing world, for example the mass media reinforce the status quo **(cf. Al-kowari, 1978; Al-misnad, 1984, and Basheer 1984).**

Respondent C raised questions about whose realism is to be shown on the media. It was an area of ideological struggle:-

> **"...The debate about media as mirrors of society is a debate about realism. It is a debate about to what extent media can truthfully hold a mirror up to nature, as Shakespeare first put it. We know that this debate is itself double sided. We know that audio-visual recording and transmissions systems**

are among some of our most highly sophisticated ways of presenting images of the world around us. We know, as we were saying a moment ago, that they come to us through very complex social filters. Those complex social filters are the producing institutions: the television companies, the film studios, the newspaper houses. Some of these have very close links with political interests. Some of them are far removed from political interests. So the realism question is institutionally reflected. Whatever the technological means of reproduction are, however perfect the photographic reproduction, the acoustic reproduction, the systems of relaying and circulation are going to be very complicated and have social interest in that way. What does it mean? The call that media will not show the illness in society seems to come again from a very particular moral viewpoint. It is a viewpoint in Britain I associate with certain positions on the Right, I suppose. There are some very strong religious voices in Britain calling for the clean-up of

**television, clean-up of media and so on. I'm not really sure what those calls are for, because a lot of the things that those complainants regard as illness, I don't think I would. There are certain voices on the Right that would like to cut down on the representation of sexuality on the mass media. I would argue the other way. I would say that sexuality is a dramatically unrepresented area. There is very limited representation of sexual behaviour and sexual preference..." (appendix 1: 678-679).**

**"I think the realism question is the fundamental theoretical question here, then there are a series of moral debates about what people in the argument feel television should be about. I think there are then some generic arguments about which genres we are talking about: news, actuality, fiction, particular kinds of fiction. Nobody complains that Shakespeare shows all the horrible things that he does in his plays because other arguments come into**

**force with Shakespeare. Maybe they should come into force with plays on television as well..." (appendix 1: 679).**

## 5.4.6.2 Analytical comment

Respondent C pointed out that ideological, political and religious influences are constantly brought to bear upon the media to try to ensure that one particular version of 'reality' is dominant at the moment of transmission. It is therefore a major concern in Media Education to make students aware of these struggles and prepare them to make informed judgements about the 'reality' they are presented with.

Furthermore, 'reality' as an aspect of the mass media (i.e., television) plays, according to Klapper (1964), Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948) a role as an agency of social control within Western society (they referred particularly to both sides of the Atlantic). Innis goes so far as to say that 'reality' represented by the mass media in Western society is:-

**".. a key to cultural change in the society" (Innis, in Rivers, 1965: 26).**

McQuail (1986) believes that both the mass media (e.g., television) and society reflect each other. He stated (1986) that the:-

> **"enormously diverse set of messages , images and ideas of which the media are made up, do not originate with the media" (but)" come from society and are sent to society" (McQuail, 1986: 251).**

Therefore, according to respondent C, the role of Media Education is to enable students to realise the significance of the surrounding factors (e.g., political, religious, media representation i.e., television etc.) **(see appendix 1: 670-684).**

Since the role of Media Education is to enable the students to be critical of what they watch, read and listen to and to be reflective as the respondents agreed (see for example, appendix 1: 647-658, 659-669 and 671-684), the students would not fail to distinguish between reality and fantasy. As has been seen in chapter 2 Cullingford (1984) found that students, as young as five are able to:-

> **"...understand the complexity of moral decisions and the meaning of death" (Cullingford, 1984: 27).**

## 5.4.7 Importance of media v. influence of media

These linked ideas were an important point of discussion among the respondents and the issues were expressed with varying degrees of concern by the respondents. Respondent B made the following distinctions of meaning:-

> **"...I would rather say the importance of the media rather than the influence of the media. What happens when you talk about influence is that you tend to assume a stimulus and response. You tend to assume a passive audience. I think it is more neutral and better to talk about the importance of the media, so those statistics about how much time children spend watching television, how much media of all varieties they consume, so that simply for that reason the media are an important element in people's lives and what goes on within society, are something that one would talk about or teach about in the same way as one would teach about any other aspect of social life. I would give a fairly neutral answer like that" (appendix 1: 659).**

**"...One criticism I would have of some other perspectives, particularly coming from the Left, is that they tend to position students as somehow helpless dupes of the media - as victims - and the teacher then comes along with enlightenment and tells them the way the world is. It seems to me that kind of approach doesn't work in classroom terms. It is not an effective approach to teaching because students resist it or reject it, but also it seems to me something that mistakes what students already know and understand. It underestimates their existing critical abilities" (appendix 1: 663).**

Respondent B rejected ideas that television had a bad effect upon reading and literacy:-

**"...I don't agree with the opposition between television and reading in that way. It seems to me, for example, that when you read a book you visualise, because a book is not visual, but equally when you watch television you verbalise. For example, you will see expressions on people's faces,**

**and you will then speculate about what those people are thinking. Whereas a book would probably have to tell you that directly: this character is thinking this now, whereas television would do that through visual means which you would have to translate into verbal thinking. I don't think you can say that one medium is superior to another in terms of the kind of thinking it makes possible. That I would very strongly want to reject. If you look at research about literacy, at how literacy campaigns in developing countries, for example, what they find is that idea that literacy itself is a good thing, and brings about progressive social change, intellectual cognitive development and benefits and so on - actually that view of literacy is quite mistaken. There is a book by Kenneth Levine which is called something like 'The Social Construction of Literacy'. It looks at *UNESCO* and how *UNESCO* promoted literacy. What it says is that you can't separate literacy, the medium, print or whatever, from the social uses. What I would argue against is**

**again the notion that any medium in itself can be educational or not educational, or that some media can be more positive than others in educational terms. It depends very much on the social uses to which the medium is put, and the context in which is gets used" (appendix 1: 665-666).**

This respondent believed that the challenge was to develop the educational potential of television:-

**"I think that goes for how you use television in media teaching, but also it goes for how you use television in education generally, so that when you use television in media teaching, one of the hardest things is just to get people to look closely at what it is you want them to watch - to just get them to a not relax but to look very hard and study what it is. I think that also applies if you want to use television in other subjects - in History or Geography or whatever. You need to break with the way in which they normally watch television and get them to look**

**at it hard and to look at it critically. I think that can be done. I don't think the medium in itself has a fixed or limited potential and no medium can be said to have more limited potential in that way" (appendix 1: 666).**

## 5.4.7.1 Analytical comment

This respondent rejected the emphasis in much of the literature that media have bad influences upon the young. He felt that it underestimated the critical capacity of the audience. He instead preferred to use the notion that media are important in many ways in relation to reading and education if they are used properly.

While he criticised many on the Left for undermining the intelligence of the audience of the media by overestimating the power of the media, he gave perceptive views on the relationship between television and reading. As has been shown in chapter 1 Johnson and Gross (1985) women who work on salaried basis read 'serious' newspapers (i.e., not tabloid).

He also highlighted the potential role of television education. In his view, television could be an effective educational medium but it was necessary to socialise students into a new way of watching and analysing the media.

Respondent C developed these ideas with reference to aesthetic values and educational potential of the media:-

> **"...film and cinema are aesthetically extraordinarily rich as forms. To talk about cinema you have to have a very highly developed understanding of how uniquely the audio-visual medium operates. I think it is arguable whether you need to bring that same aesthetic to, let's say, the discussion of the press. Newspapers do not offer the same kind of rich aesthetic experience that the cinema does, and in between, I'm not sure that television does, although television comes closer. So I think some of the work we do here offers aesthetic consideration in relation to cinema in a way it wouldn't when we are talking about the press or television" (appendix 1: 673**

Apparently, because of this **"aesthetic consideration in relation to cinema"** as respondent C asserted, the earlier research on its presumed effect began in the first 1920s to examine its effect on young people as has been discussed in chapter 1 **(see chapter 1: 3).**

**"Two things then. I would say that firstly we are thinking narrowly about education. We are thinking about the educational use of television. Although it exists in Western countries, notably in the United States and Britain, it has always existed in a very minimal form. Britain has quite a good record in this respect but if you look at the actual output of educational material in Britain and certainly in the States, it is very low-key and in recent years has been reduced even further. We won't go into all this, but the deregulation of British television has threatened the stability of educational broadcasting. It has threatened that less money will be spent, that fewer educational programmes will be made, and so on. It is not really clear in my mind that the historic levels of provision are going to be**

retained. We have yet to see that in the era of deregulation there are very strong threats posed to education broadcasting. That is one remark to make. The second remark to make is where the educational potential has been overestimated in the sense that it has been assumed, mistakenly in my view, that television will do the work for the teacher or even will do the work for the system as though simply transmitting an educational message could be the be-all and end-all. It can't be the be-all and end-all because the transmission has got to be introduced into a pedagogic context. It has got to be set into a system. It has got to come out amongst learners. It has got to be used by teachers. I suppose we are coming back here to some of the earlier questions. In my view there is only one point in making educational broadcasts if you have a teaching work force who are themselves trained and expert in using television material. We all know that one of the worst things you can do in any educational broadcast is turn the television on and let it speak

for itself, which we know many teachers, through no real fault of their own, have tended to do in class. You want a lesson on Geography, press the button, switch it on, and sit back. There has got to be a more interactive relationship with the classroom, the pupils, the teacher and the television programme. They have got to do things with it. They have got to stop it and talk about it. They have got to do exercises in relation to it. I don't know of any country in the world where there is that degree of fit between broadcasting and the schooling system. Broadcasting tends to be over there, the schooling system over there. The teachers take the bits they fancy. They are not really sure what to do with them. There needs to be a closer mesh between the two, I think. So there is a lesson there for countries looking to the West for models for development, which is: if you want a good educational broadcasting system a) produce some good television and b) train your teachers to work

**with those programmes. That is the key link"**

**(appendix 1: 675-676).**

## 5.4.7.2 Analytical comment

The central issue raised by this respondent was that if the media was to be important as an education medium then a planned approach was necessary. All teachers needed to have courses of Media Education as a necessary part of their professional preparation. This was a radical proposal which has not been implemented either in Britain or America.

Respondent A believed that we had much still to understand about what the influence of media actually is. It was relatively easy to make 'moral panic' statements about its bad influence but more research was necessary:-

**"...I think people do take advice from television. I would think in relation to how to kill someone or how to perform a criminal act that is rather rare because television takes quite a lot of trouble to disguise ways in which criminal acts might be performed. I think people take advice from**

**television in terms of how to deal with each other in personal relationships. It's a wild guess, but I think people take more positive advice from television than negative advice. When they see someone behaving in a way they think is attractive and they think is effective in reconciling a couple or dealing with a child, that is probably more influential in their lives than something bizarre or cruel or unpleasant, unless they are already disturbed people. I do accept Halloran's notion that television makes us more fearful, that because people have such wide access now to stories about the awful things that happen to you in the world, which always have happened anyway, now because you know about them it makes you fearful to go out in the streets, frightened of travelling around, frightened of letting your kids go out. It creates more fear and alarm than actual acts" (appendix 1: 649-650).**

### 5.4.7.3 Analytical comment

Respondent A emphasised the need for more research on the influence of media on people's actions. In general she believed that too many moral panic statements were made about this, without supporting evidence. However, she did advance the idea, derived from Halloran's writings, that television in particular has the capacity to make more people fearful because of the number of frightening and terrible images which it brings into every home.

## 5.5 Summary and discussion

### 5.5.1 Media Studies and Media Education

As for these two concepts, the respondents A, B, C and D had a consensus about the importance of teaching about the media. Having said that, respondents A, B and C differed slightly in terms of definitions **(see appendix 1: 646, 661 and 671).**

Respondent D did not give any definition of either Media Education or Media Studies. Apparently, this could be explained by the fact that he is more concerned with media imperialism, both in the United Kingdom and other countries, most

notably the Latin American countries. The other reason comes obviously from his account which indicates that he had no clear definitions, presumably because of the current (at the time of writing) disarray which surrounds the subject, as has been widely discussed in chapter 3.

However, this consensus among respondents A, B C and D on the importance of teaching about the media apparently derives from the fact that they are all colleagues, who teach and train both beginning and experienced teachers in London in order to qualify them to teach, primarily secondary school students.

Respondent A defined Media Education in terms of cultural perspective. In her view, Media Education ought to be placed in the national curriculum as a broader subject under which all Humanities subjects (e.g., English, Media Studies) fall **(see appendix 1: 646).**

The author of this work finds this definition interesting for two sound reasons. First, the media of mass communication are, in actual fact the main vehicles of Humanities subjects and related practices (e.g., in politics, economics etc.). English, for example is very often (if not always) represented in the mass media in many different forms such as drama, news, Open University courses (on grammar etc.). Second, the researcher believes that this respondent's definition seems to be

more precise than that of the other two respondents, B and C, who dealt with the two concepts as having the same definition. This diversion could be explained by the fact that respondent A is more concerned with applying Media Education to the whole culture rather than applying it to one aspect of the culture (i.e., the students), in which all surrounding perspectives (e.g., politics, economics etc.) feed into it **(see appendix 1: 650).**

These views were also emphasised by the *UNESCO,* among others (1977) **(see chapter 6: notes and references).** On the other hand, respondents B and C focused mostly on defining the concept 'Media Studies'. This focus on defining Media Studies relates to the fact that they are involved on a daily basis with teaching specific courses at their institution **(see appendix 1: 659-663 and 671-674).**

Respondent B derives in his definition from a Marxist-educational approach **(see appendix 1: 663).** He, for example referred to an aspect of Marx's social theory (i.e., the relations of production) **(see appendix 1: 664).** Respondent C derives from a completely educational stance **(see appendix 1: 672).** Respondent B placed Media Education within other subjects, such as English, in total contrast to respondent A. This respondent frequently manifested his views about the possible integration between English and Media Education, Media Studies in the Time

Educational Supplement (TES). Respondent B did not seem to differentiate between both terms. His views are, of course in absolute contradiction with the British government (e.g., Patten, the Secretary of State for Education).

It was not surprising that Patten (1993) justified, both the removal of Media Studies from the National Curriculum, for England and Wales and the shifting of teacher training from higher educational institutions (e.g., the London Education Institute, where respondent B teaches and trains) to schools, by referring to the corruption by Marxist teachers in higher educational institutes (he apparently referred to respondent B and his colleagues such as respondent C, D and A) **(The Guardian, 3 June 1993).**

The researcher established that these respondents, though they did not explicitly declare that they derive from a Marxist approach to teaching about the media in the way respondent B did, are also in opposition with the representatives of Education in the British Government **(see appendix 1: 647-658; 660-669).**

However, the British Media Studies teachers (the practitioners) in Newcastle teachers' conference, according to *the Guardian* (1993), were found also to be in opposition to the Government's attempts to exclude learning about the media and media training in England and Wales **(The Guardian, 3 June 1993)**.

Respondent C also referred to both 'Media Education' and 'Media Studies' as one term. Having said that, respondents A, B and C agreed on the specific narrow and precise definition of Media Studies as a designated subject which deals with the theoretical and practical aspects of the mass media. A B and C seemed also in agreement with writers who defined the concept 'Media Studies' **(e.g., Lusted).** He stated:-

> **"Judging from syllabuses at General Certificate for Secondary Education (GCSE) and 'A' levels, courses in Media Studies seem to share a basic consistency of approach. All have their content organised through the teaching of concepts" (Lusted, 1991: 5).**

Lusted believes that Media Studies in 'A' Level, and General Certificate for Secondary Education (GCSE) should cover:-

> **"studies from theory, criticism and debate about the media" (Lusted, 1991: 6).**

These subjects are among areas which are also covered by Media Studies at the University of Qatar, in addition to the cultural and Islamic media, as will be shown

in more details in chapter 6. It is interesting that Lusted did not mention Media Studies in higher education, because of his concern about the urgency of introducing Media Studies to younger students, for their exposure to the many facets of daily majority and minority mass media **(see chapter 2, also see appendix 1: 648, for example).**

The respondents seemed also to be in full agreement on the notion of understanding and respecting the knowledge about the mass media the students come with to the classroom. They urged the teachers to expose themselves to that kind of knowledge, in order to be able to teach their students productively. On the other hand, such an approach enables both teachers and students to fully participate in each others' social world.

These views, for example were expressed in 1973 by Murdock and Phelps, among others **(e.g., Hall and Whannel, 1964)** throughout their study on *The Mass Media and the Secondary schools.* They also alerted the teachers to be familiar with their students' tastes about pop music **(see chapter 1: 5).**

Respondent C, in particular extended the role of Media Studies. According to this extension, Media Studies is not merely restricted to schools, it ought to go far beyond this limited boundary. It can take place in the context of the family, public

houses, factories etc. **(see for example, appendix 1: 675).** From this perspective the respondent seemed to agree with a number of writers in the field such as, Masterman **(see chapter 2, Masterman, 1983: 171 and Emerson 1993).** Emerson believes that Media Education (Media Studies in respondent C's term), should be defined as a general theme which is based, in his view on one simple fact. He (1993) asserts:-

> **"the media (an all-encompassing label if ever there was one) convey the vast amount of information with which we all, individually and collectively, make sense of the world" (Emerson, 1993: 3).**

This approach is also adopted by the *UNESCO* which in 1977 called on all nations to consider Media Education in all levels of both lower and higher education as well as further education, as has been stated earlier in this chapter.

The author of this work considers this approach as the main motivating force behind this research which aims, among other issues, to convince the educational authorities in the State of Qatar to place Media Education in its broader use and Media Studies in its specific terms in the National Curriculum.

For, the respondents emphasised the need for such a vital subject in modern education because Media Education enables the learners to be reflective on what is happening around them, locally, regionally and internationally, to be critical in the full sense of the word and analysists of what they experience from the media. It even enables them to gain far more abilities beyond these benefits. It enables them to be not sheer consumers or users of the media, but also critical users and critical producers of the media texts.

In the world of fast advance in media technology, Media Education enables the learners, both inside and outside the schools to be aware of producing not only the media text, but also to maintain and to produce the media technology (these notions will be dealt with later in discussing the concept of 'classroom practice'). These issues are highly significant for both, creating a new and free learner and for a democracy, in which the human being ought to live as a respondent in all aspects of life particularly, in political decision making and in using, maintaining, manufacturing and developing new technologies, rather than to live as a burden on the shoulders of the others. In chapter 1 and in chapter 4 there has been an emphasis on both discovering and acquiring new knowledge. This notion is essentially necessary for a democracy **(see chapter 1, p. 2 and chapter 4).**

For, making new technologies initially relies upon the new knowledge, the human being should be able to have an access to within his/her society **(see appendix 1: 672, see also Masterman, 1985: 24 and chapter 2).** Ironically, these educational matters were expressed as early as the beginning of this century by the pioneers of the Progressive Movement such as Holmes (1911) who urged the teachers of his time to encourage creative thinking among pupils and students **(see chapter 7).** By virtue, Media Education provides the opportunities to achieve all of that, considering it is given a fair chance. Unfortunately, it is not the case in England and Wales.

Reflecting on what the respondents warned about, it could be said that the British government seems to neglect the heart of democracy which is delivering to people the means for critical education, of which both media training and teaching top the agenda. It could also, be said that the present government does not seem to be interested in people being reflective and critical as the 1993 teachers, conference in Newcastle argued **(The Guardian, 3 June 1993).**

## 5.5.2 Classroom practice

As for this concept, it is important to stress the point that, this aspect of Media Studies has been the most contentious element in this chapter. It is also the most

viable factor in Media Studies. For, it relates to the traditional controversy between theory and practice about which, Merton (1940) and Lazarsfeld (1940 & 1960) complained **(see chapter 4 and appendix 1, see also chapter 2: and chapter 4).**

As has been shown in the first three chapters, the early claimed observations and effects of the mass media since the nineteenth century and beyond, were established on a number of theories (e.g., the 'effects theory') which derived from the Behaviourism school, pioneered by researchers such as, Lashly and Watson. This school was obsessed with the child, therefore they assumed that the mass media were powerfully harmful, while the child was assumed to be completely subservient, passive powerless and innocent **(chapter 1).**

The author of this work agrees with Klapper (1964), Cullingford (1984) and Root (1986), among other writers, that other surrounding factors ought to be considered when it comes to the psychological well-being of children such as, family upbringing, unemployment, divorce and arguments within the family etc. Thus, the mass media could play merely a contributory factor **(Klapper, 1964: 3).**

Unfortunately, the implications of the legacy of the 'effect theory' are far from over. In the 1970s the 'Screen theory' claimed almost the same, but on a different

issue more or less. The 'Screen theory' pioneered by important writers in Media Studies such as, Masterman **(1980 & 1985),** assumed, as respondent B argued **(see appendix 1: 664),** the mere role of Media Studies teachers was confined to receiving knowledge from academics, who have the right to produce it and disseminate it then; the teachers were expected to pass their knowledge over to the students **(chapter 2).** The teachers were assumed to be passive mediators between the theorists and the students.

They were treated by the knowledge producers as post men and women. While on the other hand, the students were assumed to be passive, negative and knowledge swallowers **(see appendix 1: 647-684).** In the 1980s, the 'effects theory' of the early days was largely manifested in the writing of many researchers who blamed the presumed social decline and the rise of social crimes on the mass media **(cf. Winn, 1977; Howitt, 1982; McQuail, 1986; Watson and Hill, 1984; Glover, (1984); Hiebert, 1985 etc.).**

All these theories hampered the application of Media Studies, as has been argued in chapter 3 mainly, because of the fears expressed by the pioneers of the Cambridge School, since the 1920s and beyond. This school, saw the introduction of Media Studies as a direct threat to the basics in English. One could claim that this school was influenced by the 'effects theory' of the Behaviourism School **(see**

**chapter 3).** At the end of 1992, the British Government echoed the same principles of the 1920s which resulted in minimising and finally excluding Media Studies from the National Curriculum, followed by the exclusion of training Media Studies teachers in higher institutions **(see appendix 1: 660-661).** This event showed clearly the return of the 'effects theory', again after two centuries since its advent.

The respondents in this chapter strongly rejected all these theories about the effects of the media, simply because they are based on sheer moral panic. Other writers in the field share the same views with them as has been seen in the preceding chapters **(cf. Hall & Whannel, 1964; Murdock & Phelps, 1973 (see also chapter 1); Cullingford, 1984; Root, 1986 (see also chapter 2); Belsey, (1980) (see also chapter 3 etc.).**

Respondent A **(see appendix 1: 651)** totally agreed with respondent B about the application of classroom practice, because, in her views, Media Studies ought not to promote itself through face value judgement or moral judgement. Instead, all these moral views should be reviewed, analysed and critically dealt with in the classroom. Her total agreement with respondent B derives mainly from his popular debate, in the field, about the necessity to narrow the gap between theory and practice in Media Studies. The practitioners in chapter 7, for example referred

to him as a source of their daily practice **(see for example chapter 4 and appendix 2: 689).**

Respondent C, though he sympathised with respondent B's views on classroom practice **(see appendix 1: 674-675),** was sceptical about his views on 'screen theory' discussed earlier **(see appendix 1: 674-675)**. Respondent C holds the view that respondent B takes 'screen theory' as a scapegoat for the lack of classroom practice at present. He asserts that 'screen theory' contributed to Media Studies since its rise in the first 1970s and despite its short existence by, among other issues, giving teachers the chance to write about the field in screen journal and by striving to introduce Media Studies to the secondary school. Respondent C gave credit to Masterman, one of the screen important pioneers **(see appendix 1: 674-675).**

In chapter 2, the contributions of Masterman were largely reviewed especially the ten top urgent reasons he gave to include Media Education in the core of the curriculum rather than the periphery of it. As has been shown in this chapter **(see also appendix 1: 664),** respondent B's criticism of the 'screen theory' was mainly based on his rejection of the Left's views on the claimed effects of the media. The other dimension of his disagreement with the academics of 'screen theory', as has been discussed in a different context earlier was that they exploited the assumed

naivity of the Media Studies teachers by using them as a channel for their claimed superior knowledge on the subject. They then assumed that the teachers would filter their knowledge down to the students. The academics, thus denied both the right to self- government and the recognition of both the teachers and the students **(see appendix 1: 663).**

This authoritarian style of teaching is what all the respondents agree about with respondent B. Respondent B though, does not reject the theory, but he is a firm believer that theory is generated by the students themselves and in the classroom, not some where else.

This would contribute, among other issues, to closing the gap between theory and practice, discussed in chapter 4. Respondent D, also criticised 'screen theory' for not concerning itself with children below the secondary school level. For, this respondent is more concerned with children and television, especially the hidden agenda in children's programmes (e.g., 'Sesame Street'). He has apparently, been influenced by the early overriding concern of the Behaviourism School discussed earlier.

This school, apparently, was also the motivating force behind a number of other British researchers **(e.g., Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince's study of 1958)**

who were concerned with children's violence and the new appearance then of television in the United Kingdom **(see chapter 1).** Because of this, one could presume that the 'screen theory' attempted to concern itself merely with the adolescents (secondary school students), who have been neglected **(McLeod & Brown, in Brown, 1976: 199)** by the Behaviourists. This relatively new developing concern about the adolescent and the mass media promoted by the 'screen theory' was responded to by a number of writers in the field such as Murdock and Phelps (1973), three years after the rise of the Screen referred to earlier **(see also chapter 1)** and Lusted (1991), indicated earlier.

It is highly significant to emphasise that, respondents B and D tended to ignore this fact about the 'Screen theory'. However , D and respondent C share the view that Media Studies started a long time before the advent of 'screen theory', as has been explored earlier in this chapter **(see also appendix 1: 674-675).** This historical context was not discussed either by respondent B or A. The latter did not say much on classroom practice except she showed her total agreement with the former respondent **(see appendix 1: 651).** This could be explained by her overriding concern with Media Education as a general subject within the whole culture. As for respondent B he obviously was not concerned with tracing the subject historically as much as he was concerned with the present position of Media Studies 'classroom practice'. For, he is involved with training teachers to

apply the practice in the classroom. Whilst respondent C asserted that Media Studies classroom practice, in its British context, began in 1950 with the establishment of the Society of Film Teachers (SFT) **(see appendix 1: 674-675).**

Respondent D discussed the teaching of Media Studies within the Humanities during the 1960s. This period has been covered in chapter 1 by the emphasis of Hill (1950) and Thompson (1965), among other liberal teachers who alerted the British Government to include Media Studies because of its liberality in the liberal education of the time **(see chapter 1).** It is important to note that, according to respondent A **(see appendix 1: 656),** the British Film Institute (the BFI) was founded in 1933 by Reed, one of the most prominent pioneers of the liberal education. His main aim was to teach students 'film appreciation' **(see also chapter 1).** This assertion completely contradicts the assertions of both respondents C and D.

## 5.5.3 Media imperialism

On the concept 'media imperialism' the respondents referred to the American mass media products mainly, television and cinema. They focused on the American media producers' attempts to export American cultural connotations, through the cultural mass media's vehicles (e.g., children's programmes (i.e.,

Sesame Street) and soap opera programmes **(i.e., Dallas. See for example, appendix 1: 667-668)** to the United Kingdom and Third World countries.

The respondents seemed to have a consensus on the notion that, because of the United States of America's superiority in relation to its massive mass media production network and its technological capability to transmit them via its satellite throughout the globe, the countries of the world ought to respond, mainly on two initiatives. First, to negotiate a cultural relationship with American culture **(see for example, appendix 1: 667-668 and 680-683).** Second, to protect the indigenous cultures **(see for example, appendix 1: 654)** by the means of, among other measures, producing mass media products capable of gaining grounds and popularity in the United States of America and else where.

The export of cultural meanings (e.g., the superiority of the white person over the black person) has been widely expressed by the respondents. For example, respondent D, as previously mentioned, boldly criticised the American Television Workshop in New York for exploiting the presumed innocence of children by planting hidden messages in the most popular children's programme in the World, (i.e., 'Sesame Street'). It remains to say that, while respondent A and D urged for taking measures of protections such as content analysing American programmes

**(see appendix 1: 654-658),** respondents B and C seemed to be against the notion of protection **(see for example, appendix 1: 667-668 and 680-684).**

Respondent A's response can be explained in the view of her cultural interest and her concern about preserving the indigenous culture, mainly because she works in a cultural institute (i.e., the British Film Institute, the BFI) which was founded in 1933 basically to protect the English culture **(see appendix 1: 654)** by, among other methods, teaching students film studies. This respondent complained about the notion that the bulk of the films shown on British cinemas are American, mostly violent films (e.g., Rambo, Rocky, Cliff Hangers etc.) **(see appendix 1: 654-655).**

The author of this work established that respondent A was concerned with a certain cultural facet which is male violence and the American films. Another women writer in the field shares this view with her. Root (1986) elaborated that there is a causative relationship between watching violent films by men and the increase in real violence against the women, she stated that:-

**"some feminist campaigns [in the United Kingdom] against male violence have swung dangerously close to backing the idea that images of violence are**

**directly responsible for real violence. On closer examination, however, it looks like a shaky alliance: few effects researchers share the feminist's interest in social factors like male power, or economics" (Root, 1986: 14).**

This respondent apparently echoed Morley (1980) who is mainly concerned with cultural-ethnographic study. He holds a view that the mass media, especially television and cinema, should create:-

> **"..the availability of an approach which treats the audience as a set of cultural groupings rather than as a mass of individuals or as a set of rigid socio-demographic categories" (Morley, 1980: 163).**

Respondent A derives from this perspective which looks at the learners as **"cultural groupings"** who should be enabled by their teachers to participate fully in their culture in which the mass media play an enormous role **(see for example, appendix 1: 647, 659-665 and 671-675).** Whilst respondent D's response can be interpreted as evidence of his concern about children, as has been mentioned earlier and the spread of American 'media imperialism', especially in relation to

children in the Latin American countries, as has been shown earlier. This respondent wrote an article in 1985 particularly titled 'Children's Television: The Germination of Ideology' in which he defended the children of the world by arguing against the children programmes' makers by stating that:-

> **"..there is a danger that programmes made for children can inhibit their capacity for thought and intellectual development (quoted in Root, 1986: 11).**

As for respondents B and C, being teachers they were apparently not concerned with notions of cultural issues, as much as they showed their concern to learn from the technological, political and economical aspects of American mass media global production though they raised their concern about the phenomena of the cultural exportation of meaning **(see appendix 1: 668).** This learning is part of, as respondent C particularly and literally suggested, a negotiated cultural relationship with the United States of America **(see appendix 1: 680-682)** as the world is witnessing the end of the cold war.

Further, this time of the human age seems to be fertile soil for the most popular phrase of the 'global village' expressed by McLuhan, to abandon its theoretical boundaries. However, the rapid and the most dramatic development in the

American mass media transmission made possible via the ultimate and the most innovative satellite should motivate the American decision makers to abandon the old policy of cultural invasion. This initiative ought to be taken seriously if the concerned people in the United States of America are interested in changing their reputation world-wide. As has been shown in chapter 1 this specific phenomenon of the cultural invasion provoked the British educationists such as Thompson (1965) among others. The American mass media with its unlimited capability to reach any spot in the world is able to make our 'global village' happy, peaceful and worth living. It is virtually all up to the power behind the button to utilise these splendid, brilliant and most magnificent technologies for the good of all human beings against evil.

### 5.5.4 Entertainment

Although only respondents A and B elaborated on the concept of 'entertainment' they gave very interesting accounts. The term 'entertainment' has been controversial, since the rise of Hollywood films in the 1920s, as respondent C asserted (appendix 1: 677). Its controversy even goes a long time before the above mentioned period. It originates from the rise of the press in the mid eighteenth century and its influence on the parliament in London to publicise its sessions through the press to the public (see chapter 1).

This event was evaluated by writers of the mass media **(e.g., Schramm, 1960)** as a positive entertainment which enabled people to be aware of and well informed about what was going in the House of Common, as already been discussed in chapter 1.

Other forms of entertainment were attacked in the mid nineteenth century (e.g., the claimed theatrical cheap and popular shows in relation to young people in particular), as also been referred to in chapter 1. In 1965 Thompson, a British teacher wrote about the "Hollywood entertainment Industry" as a bad phenomenon which had bad influence on:-

> **"every value students learn at school" (Thompson, 1965: 17, see also chapter 1: 5).**

In 1982 Howitt wrote a book titled *Mass media And Social Problems* **(see chapter 2),** in which he claimed that the main function of the mass media is entertainment. He referred to entertainment as his predecessors did as having a bad influence on people's lives, on their church going, on their marriages, on their aesthetic values etc.

Respondents A and B completely rejected this connotation of 'entertainment' stressing that people do learn from entertainment **(appendix 1: 666-667 and 676-678),** even if the shown, read or broadcast entertainment reinforces what they already know. He gave an example of a very popular comedy form of entertainment shown on British television, (i.e., 'Fools and Horses'). This is interesting because it owes its origins to Hertzog's theory of the 1940's which assumed that people usually read and listen to what might satisfy them, as has already been discussed in more detail in chapter 2. This connotation between the mass media and the audience will also be discussed in chapter 1's notes and references **(see note 14)** in relation to the cognitive and psychological needs the University of Qatar's students obtain from watching the Qatar television. Thus, this respondent dismissed the notion of 'sheer entertainment', which means entertainment for the sake of entertainment.

By reflecting on this implication, one could say a television or a video showing a 'harmful' form of entertainment, in the consensus of most people (e.g., a sex film), should not be taken on the basis of moral judgement as being 'sheer entertainment', because those who watch it are bound to learn from it. They could learn about the variety of techniques the film makers followed by using the cameras, the sound, the lights. These strategies are very useful to learn about from a classroom Media Studies practice approach, because it is also connected to the

use of media technology. They could also learn about how to keep romance going on with their spouses or their opposite sex partners, by discovering a 'new knowledge' about the variety of ways of making love.

In the United States of America, according to Roberts et al. (1973), in a sample of parents of 3 to 11 year old children, television was ranked second after parents' sex guidelines, only to parents themselves, as the primary source for their children's sexual learning. (quoted in Sprafkin, Silverman and Rubinstein, 1980: 304). These notions of understanding the desires of the people, children particularly, and respecting them has similarities with the core of 'grounded theory' by which this research has been guided. The moral panic should not be the sole source from which the judgement about the definition of entertainment derives. The entertainment the cinema provided, since its rise in the 1920s, for example, according to McDonagh (1962):-

> **"...has brought about an enormous change in social habits and thinking (McDonagh, 1962: 119).**

According to the respondents in this chapter the teachers of Media Studies ought to enable their students to generate their own theories in a given situation. While respondent C totally agreed with respondent B on the advantages of mass media

entertainment, he asserted that he himself learns from going to the cinema to watch American films. Respondent C raised the notion that he learns about the social representation American films show **(see appendix 1: 677)**, (e.g., the violence in American streets, the way in which the Americans use their American English, the manners in which they conduct their daily lives, the film making techniques the American directors use, the way they move their cameras to apply it to a given situation in the film, the criteria they rely on to choose a certain story to make a film which can be sold and watched world-wide etc.). This respondent holds a view that this gives him pleasure, which is the main aim of being entertained. Respondent C extended his account in relation to the phenomenon of pleasure by stating that a long time before mass media entertainment, as long as the beginning of life on this planet, human beings attempted to find a variety of pleasures (e.g., the caves' drawings, religious gatherings and practice, drinking in a pub with friends etc.). In his opinion the mass media are not necessarily the main source of entertainment at the present time. This is a truism to a great extent.

Writers such as Thompson (1965) and Howitt (1982) apparently assumed that people only confine their entertainment to the mass media **(see chapters 1& 2).**

Every day life shows us, for instance, that people engage in activities which do not relate to the mass media and from which they obtain pleasure, (e.g., playing

football, going out dancing in a night club, going frequently to the mosque or church, visiting each other for a cup of tea or a drink etc.). When it comes to the 'mass media entertainment', this term tends to be highly controversial. Respondent C criticised the Left in the United Kingdom, so did respondent B, for their claims that mass media entertainment **(see appendix 1: 666-667)** is a means of diverting the people's minds from what is going around them politically, economically and socially. These views, however have been held for a long period of time.

Klapper (1964) differentiates between the phenomenon of conversion caused by the mass media entertainment which means a **"change according to the intention of the communicator" (Klapper, 1964: 62)**, and a minor change which means that a **"change in form of intensity" (Klapper, 1964: 62)** and reinforcement, as in the uses and gratification theory **(see chapter 1).** Having said that, the mass media entertainment is likely to play the role of absorbing some people's frustration towards a factor or a number of factors in the society **(Klapper, 1964: 62).**

While all of that could be true, respondent C emphasises the role of Media Education and Media Studies in enabling the students to enjoy and learn from the mass media entertainment, but on the other hand to be aware of the messages a

certain mass media entertainment attempts to deliver, (e.g., reinforcing ignorance about the status quo. **See appendix 2: 693**). This respondent also stresses one way of his teaching which is sharing with his students the learning from watching American films, as he is concerned with media technology.

## 5.5.5 Realism

As far as this concept is concerned the respondents A, B and C (respondent D did not devote much attention to this concept, apparently because of his main and dedicated concern with media imperialism, as already been said) had a consensus that the mass media in the United Kingdom do not mostly tend to represent the news coverage, as one aspect of the mass media, of both the United Kingdom and the rest of the world in its real occurrence (e.g., acts of violence and terrorism).

To comment on this very important aspect of media's news, one could say that the mass media whether in the United Kingdom or else where cannot become electronic mirrors which reflect such a phenomenon because such a reflection would enable the people who carry out the violent acts to gain access to the public via the media. The old notion that the mass media are the mirrors of the society they serve in was considered.

While the respondents agreed that the mass media are not merely mirrors because they reflect back and construct **(appendix 1: 653),** they also agreed that they are mirrors but they are distorting mirrors, because they tend to focus on some issues and neglect other issues for a variety of reasons (e.g., political, moral, religious etc.) **(appendix 1: 667).** While respondent B emphasised the notion that the documentary news are often inevitable to be partial and selective, in reference to the British television therefore, the mass media cannot be a neutral window on the world, respondent C stressed an interesting point in relation to another aspect of the representation of realism on the British television, which is the negligence of showing sex on the television **(see for example, appendix 1: 679).** As a teacher, this respondent is concerned with the educational importance of showing sexual programmes on the television, apparently, because sex is a natural activity in people's real life. Therefore, it ought to be impartially represented on the television, if the television's role is to reflect on people's experience. As respondent B pointed out that the BBC charter puts education at the top of its priority **(appendix 1: 667).** Sex, of course is an important element in modern and liberal education, as respondent C emphasised.

Respondent A raised a very interesting issue that most Holly Wood films reflect the real American life. As a teacher who deals with the mass media from cultural perspectives, as already been pointed out earlier, she is concerned with the concept

'realism', as a product of cultural interaction between the television as a cultural setting and the people, as cultural products **(see appendix 1: 647-650).**

The researcher observed that most American Cow Boy films, (e.g., 'A Fistful of Dollars') reflect the political mentality at The White House in Washington towards some countries in the Third World (e.g., the bombing raid on Libya on the 16th of April, 1986). The respondents agreed on the issue that the people who operate the mass media tend to assume that the audience are not aware of what they perceive from the media.

The respondents reject the moral judgement on which some mass media operators base their view not to show realism on the television, as the most popular medium at present. According to one of the earliest studies on the relationship between showing both real and fictional violence and the British school students, carried out in 1958 in seven major cities **(see chapter 1: 9)** in the United Kingdom, by Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince, children mostly do not mix fantasy with reality while watching the television. The researchers found that:-

**"seeing violence on television is not likely to turn well-adjusted children into aggressive delinquents;**

**there must be a predisposition for them to be affected in this way" [the factors mentioned earlier] (Himmelweit et al. 1958: 213).**

Eight years later the Television Research Committee (1966) clarified that predisposition:-

**"The whole relationship between child and television is extremely complex, for in measuring effects [this notion has been discussed in chapter 2: 27] , what the child brings to television (predispositions, relationships, and experiences in home and school, etc.) is just as important as what television presents to the child" (Television Research Committee, 1966: 13).**

Having said that, Halloran, Elliot and Murdock (1970) found that realism on television leads children and adolescents:-

**"to believe the world they see on television is a reflection of the real world. In learning to play real**

**life roles, many of them consciously rely on television models" (Halloran, Elliot and Murdock. 1970: 53-67).**

While this seems to be true the respondents share the view that the mass media operators ought to realise that the audience deconstruct during their watching. Thus, they are capable of knowing what is real and what is not. As been pointed out in chapter 2, according to Cullingford (1984) children as young as five are able to:-

**"..understand the complexity of moral decisions... and meaning of death" (Cullingford, 1984, op cit.,: 27).**

However, the concept 'realism' is very controversial, as any other concept of the mass media as has been shown. According to respondent C, Shakespeare considered whether art can truthfully hold a mirror up to nature. He elaborated on that by saying the realism of the terrible things Shakespeare showed in his popular plays, raised a wave of criticism in his time **(appendix 1: 678).**

## 5.5.6 Importance of the media v the influence of the media

The respondents joined together in completely denouncing the notion which has been inherited from the legacy of the past, that the mass media are influential **(see for example, appendix 1: 673).** As has been discussed earlier and shown in more detail in chapters 1, 2 and 3 and emphasised by the respondents, in both implicit and explicit ways the powerful influence of the mass media was based on the stimulus-response approach **(chapter 1 and respondent B, appendix 1: 659).**

As has also been said in chapter 1, the early research on the influence of the mass media which came to light in the 1920's was based on this approach, as a direct result of the moral panic from mainly parents and teachers **(cf. Cantril, 1940; Klapper, 1964; Brown, 1970).** The image of the implications of this theory heavily dominated the debate about the media since the existence of the phenomenon of writing in its different forms **(Kumar, 1989: 38).**

In the United Kingdom, for instance, the moral panic about the mass media, most notably television which is based on this theory is still intact **(see appendix 3).** According to Glover, 1984; McQuail, 1986; Howitt, 1982; Gurevitch, Curran and Woollacot,. 1982 and others, causal connections between the influence of the

mass media (e.g., cinema) and the resulting behaviour of the people who used the mass media, were hard to prove and any apparent link may be complex and difficult to express. As Klapper (1964) and others argued that there are other sources of influence, as has been debated earlier **(see also chapter 1).**

Thus, the respondents prefer to use the notion that the mass media are important especially in the classroom practice. Respondent B signified the importance of the mass media, most notably television, in enabling the viewers to verbalise, in a clear reference that the popularity of television does not necessarily deprive the process of reading books and other types of reading to its fans.

As has been stated in chapter 1 the 1985's American study carried out by Gross and Johnson proved that the claimed opposition between reading and watching television was based on sheer assumptions **(see chapter 1 for more detail).** Respondent D signalised the importance of television in enabling the students to content-analyse what they watch, so they become critical of hidden messages, which is very essential for classroom practice.

Similarly, but with a subtle difference respondents A, B and C emphasised the potential importance of television education, as an aid to the teacher, rather than using it as an educator on its own **(see for example, appendix 1: 651-652, 665-666 and 675-676).** Because television is associated in people's minds with

providing pleseaure as a source of entertainment, they seemed also to share the view that people take advice from television.

By elaborating on that, one may say people in every day life rely on television for obtaining information about the weather broadcast. This aspect of television's importance enables people to arrange and organise certain activities (e.g., setting a barbecue, going on a picnic etc.). Television can also be important in relation to other aspects of people's life. According to Sprafkin, Silverman and Rubinstein (1980) whose views have already been referred to earlier, the new sex information the American children obtain from television lead them to discuss it usefully with their parents and lead them also to learn **"something positive" (Sprafkin, Silverman and Rubinstein 1980: 303-314).**

Perhaps, from this understanding respondent C emphasised earlier the British television's role in representing sex would open another new channel for education. Having said that, television does equally have other important effects in people's life.

According to Kazee (1981), a number of American studies such as, Robinson (1976); McLeod and Brown (1976); McQuail, (1969) and Schramm (1973), found that changes in political attitudes and orientations such as, political efficacy and

trust in government, may be linked to the type and degree of media exposure **(Kazee, 1981: 507-517).** Television is also important in narrowing the gap between racial groups who live in the same society. A remarkable study carried out by Wander (1977) examined the impact of the series 'Roots I' and 'Roots II' on the American White audience.

Wander stated that 32 million households viewed one or more episodes of 'Roots I' and 22.5 million households viewed one or more episodes of 'Roots II'. He found that both series led White Americans to sympathise with the series' characters, particularly the Black's struggle for freedom from slavery (Roots I), and their post Civil War experience and struggle for equality **(Wander, 1977: 64-69).**

### 5.5.7 Being participative

All the respondents emphasised equally the notion that both teachers and students are learners in one geographical province, (i.e., the classroom). They asserted that the teachers ought to fully participate with their students in understanding and respecting each others' point of view and social world. Although the respondents did not refer to this theory, as a source of which they derive their knowledge, their practical philosophy about teaching has parallels with

the principles of 'grounded theory', most importantly the notion they strongly stressed about creating a common ground between them and their students. This principle is initially essential in their teaching because it does not relate to those authoritarian images of teachers being positive and active whilst their students are negative and passive.

This school of thought was manifested by screen theory during the 1970s, as respondents B and C pointed out earlier in this chapter. As participative teachers, they look at both poles of the learning situation as equal partners in one company, in which every member ought to benefit from each other's body of knowledge. As a result of this convention, the students outside the classroom boundaries are bound to come into contact with their favourite texts of the mass media which is different from their teachers' and vice versa. Therefore, they highlighted the point that one of the teachers' roles is to comprehend that body of knowledge, to understand it, to discuss it with his students, to show them that he or she is interested in their media, to use it as a means to get closer to his students. This would enable the teacher to recognise the areas of interest of his students, an advantage which would help the teacher to make his teaching more exciting. Children and adolescents tend to be co-operative with the teacher who they feel that he or she likes them, understands them and respect their wishes.

As has been shown in chapter 1 the empirical studies carried out in the United Kingdom on the relationship between the students' work at school and their teachers appreciation of, for instance, their taste in music showed that the more the students' media are recognised and understood by the teachers, the more the students become more productive at school **(see for example, appendix 1: 647, 662-666, 672-675. See also chapter 1: 5-8).**

## 5.6 Generating grounded theory from the respondents' accounts

**The detailed analysis of the earlier sections of this chapter has been undertaken to show the central meanings and concepts used by higher education teachers of Media Studies in England. It is now necessary to try to focus the analysis upon the ways in which these concepts contribute towards the question of grounded theory. What sort of theory or theories about Media Studies and Media Education emerge from the respondents' accounts? While there were differences in emphasis in their accounts, it is possible to say that a broad theoretical position emerged, grounded in the detail of their accounts. This broad theoretical position was characterized by a strong emphasis upon the need for Media Education (in which Media Studies would be a part) for all**

**children and young people, an emphasis upon a critical active and reflective pedagogy for Media Education, a resistance to media imperialism and an attempt to establish negotiated cultural relationships to preserve the integrity of local cultures; and an awareness that the real entertainment value of media should not be undermined by moral or political censorship masquerading as Media Education.**

**These higher education teachers in England therefore held a theory similar to that outlined by Freire (1985). Their theory of Media Education was one of "Cultural Action and Conscientization" (i.e., that Media Education should involve active critical analysis and participation and also that it should help understanding of their own cultural and political situation). From the accounts of the higher education teachers in England, a theory of cultural action and conscientization emerges. At the same time, the respondents were very aware of the difficulties in implementing such a theory because of its relatively radical nature. If Media Education was a vulnerable activity in higher education (and it was regarded as vulnerable) then it might be even more vulnerable in other social and cultural settings. It is important now to examine the theoretical positions held by other respondents to compare the extent to which their theories of Media Education either agreed with or differed from those of the English higher education teachers.**

# CHAPTER 6

# MEDIA STUDIES: PERSPECTIVES FROM TEACHERS IN QATAR HIGHER EDUCATION

## 6.1 Introduction

### 6.1.1 The University Of Qatar

The University of Qatar was founded by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al-Thani, The Emir of The State of Qatar, The Supreme President of the University of Qatar, in November, 1973 **(News Letter, 1992, Issue No. 1).**

As an initial development, two faculties of Education were established. Because The State of Qatar upholds Islamic values and cultural tradition, which mostly derives from Islam, one faculty was located for female-students, while the other faculty was located for male-students **(cf. Kotba, 1990; Abu Jalala, 1993; Al-Misnad, 1984).**

In 1977, the University of Qatar witnessed a remarkable development, which resulted in its formal transformation from the previous position which was confined to only two faculties into a University. This development was characterised by opening new faculties, in addition to the two educational faculties. These faculties were: Science, Islamic Jurisprudence (Al-Shariha) and Islamic Studies and Humanities and Social Science.

In 1978 the Department of Media Studies as will be dealt with later in more detail, was established within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences **(cf. Kotba, 1990; Abu Jalala, 1993; Al-Misnad, 1984).**

It is perhaps relevant to note that respondent D in chapter 5 pointed out that Media Studies in the United Kingdom was taught within Humanities during the 1960s, where the golden age of British Liberal Education was born. **(see chapter 5).**

Apparently, the University of Qatar seemed to be influenced by this tradition. According to Kotba (1990) the University of Qatar has, since its establishment, transferred some British teaching models to the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences **(Kotba, 1990: 50-51).** This co-operation is part of the history of friendship between The State of Qatar

and The United Kingdom since early this century **(Al-Kobaisi, 1979: 22).**

In 1980, the Faculty of Engineering was opened. In 1985 the Faculty of Administrative Sciences and Economics was established. In 1991 the Faculty of Technology was opened.

These academic developments echo the dramatic change The State of Qatar experiences in every aspect of life. At the time of writing, the University of Qatar is considering the establishment of two further faculties, a Medical faculty and a faculty for Agriculture (***Al-Raya*, May, 25, 1994: 3).**

These developments have consistently been inspired solely by the concern of His Highness Sheikh Kalifa Bin Hamad Al-Thani, The Emir of The State of Qatar, The Supreme President of the University of Qatar. He always puts the education of the Qatari Citizens at the top of his priorities. In fact, he maintained this position very clearly during a press conference in 1993 with a group of Egyptian journalists which took place in The Emiri Dewan 'from which the Emir runs the affairs of The State' (***Al-Raya*, December, 10, 1993: 1).**

The researcher observed that some Egyptian teachers claim that the University of Qatar owes them a favour for their teaching at the University. In actual fact the educational standard at the University of Qatar and elsewhere in the country was claimed to become less efficient, especially in regard to teaching English as a foreign language since it has been invaded by some poor quality Egyptian teachers **(cf. Galalah, 1992: 20; Abu Jalalah, 1993: 72, British Council, 1980: 10).** According to a British Council Report in 1980 'Language Teaching Profile, in Saudi Arabia' (which is also applicable to The State of Qatar for reasons which will be mentioned later in this chapter):-

> **"Most of the Egyptians and other expatriate Arabs look upon their four years in the Kingdom (and The State of Qatar) as a penance. They have little interest in the progress of their pupils. In no way do they question the suitability or effectiveness of materials and they employ outdated teaching methods principally to enable pupils to pass questionable examinations" (British Council Report, 1980: 10).**

The researcher would exempt those teachers who worked in the West **(e.g., respondent AQ in this chapter).** In relation to this point the researcher has urged the Government of The State of Qatar in an interview with *The Gulf Times,* aQatari English Language daily newspaper, to recruit teachers and other expertise from advanced countries and to abandon importing teachers and others from developing and under developed countries. The latter has presumably been taking place under dead slogans of Pan Arabisim which has unfortunately been experienced in recent years to be a complete disappointment **(The Gulf Times, November, 12, 1989: 12).**

As a matter of fact Islam rejects such a slogan as 'racist'. Simply because Islam is the religion of all fellow human beings **(Ibn Mahmood, 1972, Friday Speech),** as will be shown in more detail in chapter 8.

An Arab female teacher (non-Qatari) at the University of Qatar had this to confess about the level of teaching at the University and elsewhere in The State of Qatar:-

**"In spite of having university degrees not all English language teachers, who are non-native speakers of the English**

**language, have the proficiency level required in the job of teaching an innovatory course such as the Crescent course. This can be attributed to the fact that most of these teachers' experience comes from the structural courses dominant in schools in their own countries (Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine)" (Abu Jalalah, 1993: 72).**

Dubin and Olshtain (1986) observed this about the crisis:-

**"In the foreign language setting, teachers are typically non-native speakers who may have never spent time in an English speaking country and therefore may find it much harder to make decisions of a native-like nature" (Dubin & OLshtain, 1986: 31).**

## 6.1.2 The Department of Media Studies

This Department was established in 1978 with twenty five students and two non-Qatari teachers with Ph.D. degree in Media Studies. In 1979 the students issued their first Weekly Newspaper called The 'Voice Of The University', in which they expressed their views about domestic, regional and international issues. This is, of course, among the most important aims of Media Studies, which is to encourage and enable the students to reflect upon their experiences, as the respondents in chapter 5, this chapter and chapter 7 emphasised **(see for example, appendix 1: 664-684).**

There is no higher educational training in the State of Qatar for either beginning or experienced Media Studies teachers, as is the case in the United Kingdom **(see for example chapter 5 and appendix 1: 174).**

The Media Studies Department within the University of Qatar does however, qualify Qatari students with Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Media Studies for work in either media fields or in teaching a relevant subject such as Arabic Society and History, etc.

As for the courses which are taught at this Department, respondent BQ, one of the three teachers who teaches at the Department at the present, explained the context of the work on the behalf of his colleagues:-

**"Media Studies in the context I and my colleagues teach at the University of Qatar and elsewhere in the world is relatively a recent development. My definition of Media Studies derives from my teaching experience in this university where I teach my students a number of subjects (e.g., folk media, Islamic media, the history of media research, theories of media of mass communications and development in mass media technology). The latter sub-subjects I teach to my students under a subject called Media Studies (appendix 1: 645).**

## 6.1.3 Studies into the role of the mass media in Qatar

It is perhaps relevant to review a number of studies conducted prior to the interviews. In 1984, Basher found that:-

**"In a society such as Qatar, where the sources for information and entertainment**

**are severely limited, the importance of television programmes as the informational and entertainment source is quite obvious. One evidence of this is the number of television sets which are owned by Qatari people. A comparison is made to other Arabian Gulf states (e.g., Saudi Arabia, the largest society amongst the entire Gulf societies) and some western countries including the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the (former) USSR. (The comparison) shows that Qatar ranks first in per person ownership of television sets when compared to the other Arab Gulf states. It follows that Qatari people, more than others, use television as a substitute for other informational and entertainment sources" (Basher, 1984: 19).**

Interestingly enough, respondent BQ in this chapter, as will be shown later, gave the figure of 700 television sets for every 1000 people in the

State of Qatar. This implies, in the light of the 1984 figure and April 1993, when respondent BQ had given his statistics, an increase of almost 240 television sets in a period of almost a decade. This is mainly due to increased financial opportunities of Qatari people among other reasons. However, the 1984 study by Basher did not provide any statistics on video ownership in Qatar despite the fact that Home Video Cassette Recorders (HVCRs) 'invaded' Qatari households as early as the 1970s.

Boyd and Straubhaar (1985) have undertaken an interesting research into 'the impact of Home Video Cassette Recorders (HVCRs) on non-industrialised Third World societies'. For the purposes of this study, the focus here was only on Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia shares almost all the cultural, institutional and societal characteristics of the State of Qatar. In fact the researchers chose Saudi Arabia as a representative sample of all Gulf states. Boyd and Straubhaar stated:-

> **"The Arabian Gulf states are a starting point because they probably constitute the Third World's largest home video market. These countries also exhibit virtually all of the characteristics for making VCRs popular. It was only during the 1970s that**

these countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates) became extremely wealthy because of increased oil prices" (Boyd and Straubhaar, 1985: 10).[1]

Boyd and Straubhaar (1985) found that HVCRs were first imported into Saudi Arabia in 1972 and their popularity had been dramatically increasing in Saudi households since then.

What Basher implied (1984) about the importance of Qatari television for Qatari people has been confirmed by respondents AQ, BQ and CQ, as will be discussed in more detail later.

### 6.1.4 Introductory note to the analysis

Having reviewed and subsequently analysed the views of four London institutional respondents, as has been shown in chapter 5, this chapter will review and analyse the perspectives of three Doha higher educational respondents in order to generate a comparative account.

The main issues which linked both groups of respondents were questions of media imperialism and discussions about Media Studies and Media Education, 'Media Studies practice and 'Being participative as an active pedagogy', entertainment, realism and 'importance of the media versus influence of the media'. On 'classroom practice' at secondary school level, the three Doha respondents had little to say. This is related to the fact that Qatar schools have not yet witnessed the development of Media Education. Therefore, the focus will be on the central meanings and concepts of 'Media Studies practice' and 'being participative as an active pedagogy' at the Department of Media Studies in the University of Qatar. Other concepts and central meanings to the respondents' social setting will also, be dealt with (i.e., 'entertainment', 'realism' and 'influence of the media versus importance of the media').

As has been emphasised in chapter 5 which is also appropriate for this chapter, in the process of analysing central concepts and meanings the researcher has to note that, from his angle, analysis is about meaning in contexts. In other words, analysing the central concepts and meanings was concerned with the accounts in their contexts.

Analytically speaking, quoting a respondent, in relation to a concept (e.g., 'Media Studies practice' and 'Being participative as an active pedagogy') refers to that discourse within the context of 'Media Studies

practice and 'Being participative as an active pedagogy'. However, it was also, essential to use parts of the same quotation found in a different context (e.g., discussions of the concept 'Media Education' and 'Media Studies').

The point is made here that, extensive use of quotation is necessary to grasp the central meanings and concepts of the respondents and what may sometimes come into view as repetition is discourse being used in different contexts. This introductory note to the analysis is also, applicable to the next chapter.

## 6.2 The central meanings and concepts

The following central meanings and concepts which were highlighted by the respondents will be analytically commented on.

* **Media Studies and Media Education**

* **media imperialism**

* **Media Studies practice and being participative as an active pedagogy**

* **entertainment**

* **realism**

* **influence of the media versus importance of the media**

## 6.2.1 Media Studies and Media Education

Respondent AQ believed that media had important educational effects and that, therefore, it was important to prepare students and teachers to understand these effects:-

> **"...media are, in a sense, all educational. Although they are often used for entertainment, media are always more than mere entertainment. Even when media are not intentionally designed to**

**teach, they carry messages about social interactions and about the nature and value of the different groups in the society and these messages can, and do, influence attitudes, values and actions among their audiences, including students. Media serve as a source of information about the world, whether readers, listeners and viewers seek entertainment or enlightenment. If we accept this assumption, we have, then, to believe in the importance of teaching teachers how media work and influence their audiences, notably students" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent BQ defined Media Studies according to his educational and teaching philosophy. He introduced interesting notions of 'folk media' and 'Islamic media'. These two notions are distinctive.

**"Media Studies derives from my teaching experience in this university where I teach my students a number of subjects (e.g.,**

**folk media[1], Islamic media, the history of media research, theories of media of mass communications and development in mass media technology). The latter sub-subjects I teach to my students under a subject called Media Studies (appendix 1: 645).**

This respondent holds the view that Media Education has a broader role to play in the society. In this sense he is in total agreement with the respondents in chapter 5. He elaborated:-

**"I agree with you that Media Education is mainly about the necessity to media-educate everybody in the society, not necessarily only the young, to be aware of what they read, listen to and watch. Accordingly, Media Education is everybody's responsibility. It is not limited to merely schools and teachers. A parent can play a crucial role in the home in media educating his/her children about the newspapers they read, the songs they**

**listen to and the films they watch. This is a part of the child's upbringing as well as it is an Islamic responsibility" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent BQ believed that a greater development of Media Education was necessary:-

**"I would conclude this by emphasising the need for teaching Media Studies to both beginning and experienced teachers and on a wider scale in higher education and in secondary schools. There are few universities in the Arab World which teach Media Studies except most notably Egypt, where there is a Media Studies Department within Cairo University. As far as Media Studies is concerned, it is a great pity that our schools, especially secondary schools, do not teach such a crucial subject. In a country like Qatar, where there are 700 television sets for**

every 1000 people, 650 video sets for the same number of people and, more importantly, there are 200 television receiving dishes for every 1000 people similarly especially those between 5-18 years old, have very high exposure to this cultural phenomenon. The secondary school curriculum at least ought to respond to this cultural situation. Out of the huge sums of money which Gulf television agencies pay for mainly American programmes, some of this money ought to be saved for researching into the influence of the media on people, specifically on the young. Money also should be used for researching and analysing the content of these programmes. What is happening now and what has been happening since the 1970s is that the Gulf television agencies pay lavishly for American series and then the censors censor those programmes. This

**results in removing some parts of them, on sheer claims and hypothetical observations. In my view, if Media Studies began to be introduced into Gulf secondary schools, students will be able to learn, among other skills, television content analyses which will transform our students from being consumers of television to analysts and people who can critique" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent CQ emphasised the importance of the concept of 'folk media' in Arabic states:-

**"In Egypt, as one example of an Arab-Moslim country, the folk media, which have always been predominated by Islamic beliefs over the past seventeen centuries, were the main inspiring force behind the struggle against foreign invaders of Egypt on the one hand. The folk media, on the other hand, have always also played an**

essential role in the family where children grow up and in the school where they learn. Nevertheless, one of the significant developments in the history of Media Studies took place in the 1960s in Egypt. This was the teaching of modern media in particular as a response to the rise of Nasser Socialism. For the sake of ruling Egypt by a combination of secular philosophy, Nasser crushed the Islamic movement by 1965. Thus the media, especially radio and cinema, were employed for propaganda purposes to promote mainly Nasser as the pioneer of pan-Arabism. Media Studies in Egypt at the university level implemented a socialist approach similar to Media Studies of the, then, Soviet Union. The Nasserite approach to Media Studies was concerned mainly with creating a 'harmonious personality'. This among other factors, enabled Nasser to second an army of mass

**media employees, journalists, etc. to almost all Arab countries. Some writers in the West have claimed that Media Studies have no history in the Arab World, although 90% of journalists, reporters, broadcasters, etc. who work in the Gulf states, for example, are Egyptian. Those media employees are the living proof of Egypt's preoccupation with Media Studies for the past three decades or so" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent CQ believed that Media Studies education was a strong necessity in all Arab states:-

> **"Media Studies ought to be taught at all educational levels in the State of Qatar. It is a civilizational necessity. Teaching Media Studies in schools would be a cultural breakthrough. Now ... if you have been embarking on such a thing, which is an attempt to benefit from the Western**

**experience ... that is very good for the whole world has come to be a global village because of the amount of television transmission we perceive from all over the world" (appendix 1: 645).**

### 6.2.1.1 Analytical comment

Respondent AQ highlighted the notion that media serve important educational purposes. Having lived and worked in the United States of America, he echoed an American school of thought which emerged in the mid 1950s and which was mainly concerned with using media in education. The pioneers of the latter school were Dale, Schramm, Tyler and Fearing. Those pioneers of media in education had manifested their views in a publication edited by Henry in 1954. Dale explained the motive behind the book:-

> **"This book is prepared with teachers, parents, supervisors, principals, and superintendents in mind. Its title, 'Mass Media and Education' suggests that mass media play a role in education and that these media must, therefore, be looked**

**upon with concern and respect. We are concerned with these mass media as influences arising in the out-of-school life of the child or youth and in the normal experiences of the adult" (Henry, 1954: 1).**

Respondent AQ said in this interview that he had been influenced by this pioneering school of mass media and education studies.

Respondent BQ introduced notions of 'folk media' and 'Islamic media'. These two notions reflect his educational and teaching philosophy. Respondent BQ had come to the University of Qatar from the oldest Islamic university in the entire world, Al-Azhar. Although this respondent did not talk in much detail about the idea of 'folk media', he apparently referred to the pre-electronic mass media period. For example, in the State of Qatar, the Qatari 'folk media' were rich in aesthetic standards (e.g., dancing and singing) which, one may assume, existed in other national cultures differently.

Kumar (1989) has also made this point, having stated that 'folk media', whether in Qatar or elsewhere, has been neglected by the new focus on

modern mass media. Kumar has criticised this situation especially in African and Asian societies:-

> **"It is also significant that most attempts at Media Education, and most discussions on the subject, are restricted to the modern technological media; there is very little mention of the traditional and folk media which are indeed the majority of 'mass media' in the developing countries of Asia and Africa" (Kumar, 1989: 43).**

Kumar placed the blame for that neglect on Western social science, most notably the positivistic school of research. One would argue that Arabic, Asian and African universities ought to focus on 'folk media' and develop it by reviving it instead of reproaching the West for 'cultural invasion'.

Respondent AQ blamed the West for the 'Americanisation' of Arab television as will be discussed later in the process of analysing respondent AQ's concept and central meaning of 'media imperialism'.

It would be more productive to focus on 'folk media' and on its relation to modern mass media. Other teachers and researchers ought to dedicate time to this crucial aspect of cultural inheritance to which the national heritage is mutually related. In fact, very little reference is made in the literature to the notion of 'folk media' in relation to the Third World, most notably in the Gulf States.

The researcher can also claim that almost all people in the Gulf States are shaped by the cultural folk and Islamic media in relation to customs, habits, traditions and way of life. For instance, 'folk sayings' (e.g., 'the head of wisdom is the fear of God', 'spend whatever is in your pocket (money), God will provide with more', 'a happy dish (food) makes one hundred people completely sated', 'if you make your parents happy, God makes you happier') are very pervasive.

The concept and notion of 'folk media' will be dealt with in more detail throughout chapter 8. It will be discussed in relation to the state of Qatar as a representative example of Islamic societies in respect of Islamic folk media on the one hand, and as a representative sample of the Gulf states in regard to both folk media and Islamic folk media.

According to Williams (1976) 'folk' had a **"general meaning of people"** in the past **(Williams 1976: 136).** Whilst Hoggart in his book *The Uses of Literacy* (1957) argued that the arrival of electronic media of mass communications withered away the folk media in the United Kingdom, there are and have been strong claims in the Islamic world that despite the popularity of modern media, especially in its advanced technology through satellite transmission from all over the world, the medium of the mosque has maintained its pervasive influence on people.

The relationship between folk media and modern media seems very interesting. In fact Islamic folk media have been, since the penetration of electronic media, manipulating the latter for transmitting its messages (e.g., broadcasting Friday prayers and speeches in all Islamic countries Islamic programmes on television and radio particularly, the priority for Islamic programmes at the beginning of television and radio daily beginning of transmission).

The folk media refer to folk songs, for instance, which have been a cultural ingredient for centuries (e.g. folk songs related to the pearl diving industry), folk 'majalis', messages and guidelines, and discipline. All this will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 8.

Folk poetry is more popular in the Arab world as a whole than watching television, for instance. It must be said however, that this area has not yet been touched by serious research.

Respondent BQ used the notion of 'Islamic media'. By this concept he referred to events such as the Friday speeches at mosques. This kind of Islamic media has much influence on devout Moslims(e.g., the revolt and the uprising in the Arab occupied territories was fiercely motivated and inspired by Moslim speech makers).

Respondent BQ seemed to agree with quite a number of British scholars in relation to the danger of making claims and assumptions about the influence of television on the young in the absence of actual research. Respondent BQ had referred to Halloran as an important influence on his school of thought.

Respondent BQ emphasised the omnipresence of television and its main joint permutation (i.e., the Home Video Cassette Recorders, HVCRs) in the Qatari society. Respondent BQ is in disagreement with the respondents in chapter 5 about the recent development of Media Studies.

Respondent CQ emphasised the importance of the folk media in Arabic states. He referred to the influence of Qur'anic education before the foundation of modern education. In the State of Qatar almost all the first cabinet ministers were Qur'anically educated only. Modern education was first introduced in the 1950s. He also referred to other aspects of Islamic folk media, particularly the Friday speech makers who have been the main impact on Moslim movements in Egypt and Algeria, despite the state-owned modern media which has had very little and limited impact on people in comparison to the folk media. However, it is possible to overstate the influence of American media. In actual fact, the popularity of Qatari folk media, though it has always been influential, is increasing dramatically. Among these are the networks of rumour which is a medium on which most people in Qatar rely with respect to, mainly, domestic developments. Also important in my view, are the religious scholars' 'guidelines' circulated through private circles.

The 'Majalis', the private guest rooms where mostly Qatari indigenous people discuss freely without restrictions local, regional and international affairs, are influential. These forms of folk media in Qatar may be observed to have far more importance to most people than the media of modern technology.

The importance of Arab folk media was stressed by respondents BQ and CQ in particular throughout this chapter. It is also interesting to reflect upon respondent CQ's comments in this chapter about the rise of Nasserism and his socialist manipulation of media in Egypt. Boyd and Straubhaar (1985) have asserted:-

> **"There is no better example of a political leader dedicating substantial funds to media development than that of Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser. Nasser promoted film productions, television, and especially radio, in the form of the 'voice of the Arabs" (Boyd and Straubhaar, 1985: 7).**

Although successful at first in promoting Nasser's brand of Arab nationalism on a regional basis, it was not effective in the longer term. As respondent CQ asserted, the Islamic folk media were far more influential.

## 6.2.1.2 Media imperialism

Respondent AQ stressed his concern about American television products in the Arab World, as a vehicle of American cultural invasion into the State of Qatar:-

> **"Talking about the American cultural invasion via certain forms of the mass media, most notably television, ought to be accompanied by examination of the messages and meanings the American producers deliberately export overseas, particularly to the Arab World. For example, the Cultivation theory of George Gerbner and others found enough evidence to prove that the messages of television, for instance, are distinctive and deviant from 'social reality' on several key points, yet persisted exposure to them leads to its adoption as a consensual view of society. The main evidence for the Cultivation theory comes from systematic analyses of American television carried out over several years and showing**

**consistent distinctions of reality in respect of family, work and roles, education, violence and crime. Although this might be true only of American society, the fact that a great deal of American television productions are extensively aired on Arab television channels in a phenomenon called 'the Americanisation of Arab television' causes a lot of concern for us" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent AQ was concerned about the effects of this cultural invasion upon children:-

**"The ideological invasion of American media culture, most notably television productions, into the State of Qatar, among other Arab countries, does not need any further evidence to be proved. Thus, those who believe that American television forms of ideological exportation, under the overt slogan 'socialisation', play a crucial**

**part in the early socialisation of children and the long-term socialisation of adults, should be very concerned about the invasion of American culture through television specifically" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent BQ devoted much time to explaining his view of media imperialism:-

> **"In order to put this very essential and central concept into perspective, I would argue that media imperialism historically speaking began in the United States of America for domestic consumption (e.g., political and economic reasons as early as the 1920s) when the American film, within its Hollywood industry, started implementing messages which led to observed bad influence on American children, messages which served political purposes and so on. That is one aspect of my argument. Thus, the producers of the**

**American film industry did not actually target the outside world with their explicit and implicit ideologies until recently. When it comes to Gulf countries, and Qatar is of course part of this, the United States film companies export their products for economic reasons ... Now the claim about American cultural invasion is to a degree overemphasised. You mentioned 'Sesame Street, 'Dallas', 'Rocky', 'Rambo', and when you analyse these programmes they are bound to be containing cultural messages, but these messages do not necessarily have to be interpreted as cultural invasion" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent BQ believed that an accommodation could be made between Islamic culture and the use of Western mass media:-

**"Islam, which is a way of life, is a flexible religion and it does not in my view prevent**

**Moslims from being open to other national cultures ... Media such as television is such a large window on other cultures ... and we as teachers, parents etc. can make sure that our children, our students, do not simply imitate the representation in those American media products. Teaching our children and students and our people as a whole about the significance of Islam as an open religion is among one of the most effective means to let our people be open on ... say American media culture while bearing in mind their Islamic self-censorship" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent CQ also, devoted his account of media imperialism to the idea of 'cultural co-operation' between Islamic culture and American cultural media. This idea of cultural compromise will be dealt with later, in Chapter 8, in greater detail.

Respondent CQ outlined the way in which he believed that Media Studies and Islamic values could be accommodated beyond the moral panic of the overemphasised, media imperialism. He explained:-

**"We should help our students to realise that they are committed Moslims. In the Qur'an, God educated us that the fundamental message of the committed Moslim is building up the planet. Thus, any source of enjoyment should be directed towards that initial message. The pluralist values can't be applicable entirely to our Islamic values. We should help our students to realise that Islam is for all human beings on earth, therefore, they should be allowed, for instance, to watch American television, as it may be a source of good messages and they can improve their English. We should help them to watch all that, to take advantage of this technological breakthrough in media-television transmission-with their**

Islamic eyes. If a man or a woman is convinced of Islam as a way of life, nothing on earth would influence him/her. They are bound to relate what they watch to their Islamic values. And maybe finally I would say by doing this we actually encourage them and pose a challenge for them to produce their own media carrying their Islamic values. We also should inspire them to export their products ... these days in Qatar we possess high level media technology. We can thus help our students to feed back. In my view this constitutes the real role of the Moslim viewer of American television, especially the films, series and the music. There is a misconception, held by some people in the West, that Islam forbids music ... we should help our students, in the same vein to make their music, which some Qatari students have done. Their music is popular here and in the region. Islam, as

**you know, rejects music which arouses the desire of the young in particular, the music which encourages male and female to dance together as it happens in the West ... We also see this quite a lot on television.. Islam forbids such a thing for its long term pervasive bad influence on the well-being of the society. Such a mixture between two sexes with the aid of drink, loud and desirable music, girls in indecent clothes in our definition, is certainly leading to adultery which leads to illegitimate children, to diseases, Aids, etc. Therefore, we should help our students to reflect on that cultural experience and produce music which carries their Islamic values in objective ways ... this, of course, is applicable to other forms of cultural production. Cultural co-operation in this golden age of media technology is a necessity" (appendix 1: 645).**

### 6.2.1.3 Analytical comment

Respondent AQ highlighted the notion that American television producers export certain messages and meanings through their productions to Arab countries. He made reference to the American children's television series 'Sesame Street' which in his view contained hidden messages. This notion has been widely emphasised by many analysts **(e.g., respondent D in Chapter 5 and the Latin American researchers, Mattelart and Waksman) (Mattelart & Waksman, 1981: 56-66).**

It is worth considering furthermore that, as far as Qatari television is concerned, there has as yet been no content analyses of any kind of American 'Sesame Street' series or any other American television (e.g., films and series such as, 'Dallas') despite the fact that 'Sesame Street' has been viewed by children in Qatar since the early eighties. This could lead the children to subliminal learning which might result in a kind of indoctrination in favour of American exported cultural ideology. This might be related, among other factors, to the fact that almost 80% of Qatari students who have been studying abroad between 1980 and 1993,

study in the United States of America **(the Ministry of Education, 1993).**

Most of the American television shown in Qatar emphasises among other messages and meanings the glamorous way of social life in American society (e.g., 'Dallas'), which is a cultural dream for most Qatari adolescents and youth in general.

Nevertheless, respondent AQ's notion that the American producers specifically target the Arab World with their exportation of cultural ideology via the medium of television's production seemed to be overemphasised.

American television's production and other forms of media are shown in almost every country around the world, Latin America and India for example, as previously mentioned in chapter 5 as well as this chapter.

In a country such as the United Kingdom, according to respondent A in chapter 5, almost all cinemas and television show American films and series respectively **(see also appendix 1: 654).** However, on the American cultural 'invasion' into Arab countries, respondent AQ's

particular emphasis may be explained by his apparent frustration, which is shared by many Arabs and Moslims, with the perceived American support for Israel, especially since the Arab defeat by Israel in 1967. In particular this respondent, as an Egyptian, came from a country which suffered most from the 1967 defeat.

Respondent AQ had been influenced by the Cultivation theory pioneered by Gerbner of the Annenberg School of Communication at Pennsylvania.

Gerbner was mainly concerned with violence on American television. He popularised the message system analysis technique which involved examining not only the number of incidents of violence but also who the perpetrator was, the setting of the violent act (in terms of time and space) and the general circumstances **(Gerbner, 1972: 1-23).** Gerbner conducted his pioneering research in two parts. The first lasted between 1967-1969. The second part lasted till 1979.

Respondent AQ also emphasised the notion that American television distorts the reality of social life in American society. On this particular

point he was in full agreement with respondent B in Chapter 5 on the point that mass media may be called mirrors of society, but they are distorting mirrors.

This respondent assumed that young viewers in the State of Qatar, as they are often the centre of concern, as has been discussed particularly in chapters 1 and 2, could be influenced by violent American films. He also referred to the possible impact of 'Dallas', for example, on girls in Qatar. While these observations may be valid to some extent, in the case of some viewers the researcher's own observation suggests that the apparently deeply-rooted and solid Islamic upbringing and educational values among the young prevent them from imitating the values and style of American media productions.

Such a claim about the presumed influence of television 'Americanisation' may be related to considerations of moral panic in Qatar, in the Department of Censorship at the Ministry of Information and Culture. For, this department censors American media products on the basis of moral judgement. This Department has, since its establishment in the early 1970s, embarked on a policy of censoring assumed 'bad clips' in mainly American television productions. There

has, however, been no serious attempt to conduct research into the claimed effects of the 'bad clips', nor has there been content analyses for imported American television.

A major contradiction here is related to the fact that Qatar's two television channels operate 24 hours daily. These long hours of transmission create a need for many 'exciting' programmes. As respondent C stated in Chapter 5, the United States of America remains the main (if not the sole) source of such supply.

Respondent AQ seemed to neglect what may be educationally valuable in watching American television and other forms of media production. For example, many viewers in Qatar, particularly the students, watch American films and series for, among other benefits, the learning of English in its different contexts **(Basher, 1984: 30).** English is the second important spoken language in the State **(see chapter 8 for more detail on this issue).**

Nonetheless, Liebes and Katz (1990) have a different view to respondent AQ about the export of American television most notably

'Dallas' to the Third World. They stated in *The Export of Meaning* that:-

> **"The study of audience decodings of American television programmes is even more acutely needed overseas than it is domestically...Until very recently nothing at all was known about meaning perceived by overseas viewers of American television programmes. The emphasis of intercultural communications research was almost exclusively on institutional aspects, on audience ratings, and on occasional studies of effect (particularly in the area of economic development) but nothing at all was known about the meanings perceived in imported programmes" (Liebes and Katz, 1990: 14).**

This view has been emphasised by the researcher in his analytical comment on media imperialism. It has been stated that the perceived 'invasional impact' of American television and cinema programmes and films on Qatari culture is very often based on sheer assumptions and to a great extent on resentment of American political and economic roles in the Middle East.

Respondent AQ blamed the West for the 'Americanisation' of Arab television. Being an Egyptian he, in actual fact, seemed to turn a blind eye to the 'Egyptianization' of the Gulf States' televisions which export Egyptian secular values to the Gulf States' societies (e.g., sales of drugs, opposition to the women's Islamic dress-code, the use of bad Arabic such as swearing and blasphemy). This kind of condemnation against the presumed 'American invasion' through the vehicles of the modern mass media is typical of some cultural scholars in developing countries.

Respondent AQ introduced the notion of ideology which has been widely considered by socio-cultural scholars **(e.g., Althusser 1969; Eco, 1982)** as a central and crucial concept in cultural studies. This respondent apparently derived his definition of ideology from Eco and from Althusser. As Eco puts it:-

**"Ideology is the final connotation of the totality of connotations of the sign or the context of signs" (Eco, 1982: 91).**

Althusser in his classic paper 'Ideology and ideological state apparatuses' [2] argues that:-

**"...all ideology hails or interpolates concrete individuals as concrete subjects ... ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all) or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called interpolation or hailing and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday practice (or other) hailing: 'Hey, you there!'" (Althusser, 1969: 162-163).**

These quotations seem to reflect the same concerns as respondent AQ.

Respondent BQ believed that there was no need for a moral panic reaction about claimed American media imperialism in Qatar. He was confident that the rooted and solid Islamic values among Moslim people, especially the young, prevented them from imitating American media products.

Although there has been no systematic research yet into this area in the State of Qatar, the researcher has observed that despite the fact that Qatari television shows a great deal of American television, it has not been a negative influence. Qatari youngsters between 18-25 years old who go to the mosque watch the television for passing the time away, entertainment and learning English.

The researcher has observed that, over the last ten years, there has been an increasing number of Qatari girls who wear the Islamic dress-code, and also an increasing number of Qatari youngsters between 18-25 years old who go to the mosque frequently. Accordingly, there is no simple correlation apparently between the amount of American television shown in Qatar and change in behaviour.

Respondent BQ also highlighted the notion of the moderation of Islam as a flexible religion which assumes that every Moslim believer possesses his/her own guidelines of censorship in respect to watching

American films and series. This assumption in Islam is based on a broader assumption that the Moslim believer must bear in mind the fear of God, the greatest creator, in every moment. This assumption implies, for example, that if a Moslim believer watches an American series with the intention of knowing about another culture, for the sake of cultural knowledge, that is Islamically acceptable, but if he/she watches the same programme for other purposes (e.g., for men to watch women in the series and for women vice versa), it is Islamically unacceptable.

This more flexible code of Islam could be related to a kind of compromise or negotiated cultural relationship between Islamic values and American media culture. In suggesting the possibility of a negotiated cultural relationship, respondent BQ was in full agreement with respondents B and C in Chapter 5.

Respondent CQ interestingly, raised the notion of cultural media co-operation between Islamic values and Western-led American pluralist values with assumptions that committed Moslim students could be exposed to American television from a cultural point of view. He believed that critical study of the media would make them critical producers of the media. In the same way, respondent CQ suggested that Moslim committed Media Studies students could have an influence on

American television products. This respondent seemed also to dismiss the presumed influence of American television invasion into Qatar. He was a firm believer in the power of Islamic values to influence the young in particular more than Western television transmission.

The Qatari Advisory Council (the parliament) began in 1991 a debate on the 'claimed' harmful influence on youth of some television programmes and films. It asked its Information and Culture Committee to study various programmes screened on Qatar television and present a report to the Council (***Al-Raya*, December, 11, 1991: 3).**

This had resulted from a debate raised in *'Al-Tarbiya* (Education) Magazine' which was itself a direct response to the 'assumed' increasing amount of 'Americanisation' on television (***Al-Tarbiya*, November, 25, 1990: 7-11).**

Respondent AQ in this chapter has drawn attention to the mounting public 'moral panic' about observed television violence and horror almost entirely imported from the United States of America.

Despite the fact that respondents BQ and CQ in this chapter have played down media imperialism, it is still a commonplace observation in Qatar that American media imperialism has through its products

imposed certain ideological effects on Qatari media culture. This manifests itself, among other issues, in Qatari media adoption of American methods of market economy, including advertising commercialism mainly via television. It can also be observed that Qatari advertising is for especially luxurious commodities (e.g., expensive cars).

Qatar is a stratified, multi-cultural society with working, lower and semi-middle class families whose financial status does not enable them to afford these products, which the mass media attract them to. Media imperialism, however, implies something more than a static imbalance of trade resources. media imperialism can be economic, political and cultural. According to Cohen (1977):-

> **"Economic relations with the rich, transmit to the poor a profile of preferences and desires altogether unsuited to their economic and social needs. This distribution of expenditure does not reflect tastes which have been autonomously determined by their citizens and governments, but rather reflect the**

**configuration of ideals and values, styles and fashions, generally associated with the system of global capitalism ... Trade transmits the configuration through what is usually called the 'demonstration effect'. This refers to the tendency on the part of many people in poor countries (at least those who can afford it) to attempt to emulate the consumption patterns of rich nations about which they constantly read in their press, or hear on their radio, or see for themselves on their television and in the movies" (Cohen, 1977: 22).**

### 6.2.1.4 Media Studies practice and being participative as an active pedagogy

Respondent AQreferred to his teaching practice by highlighting the notion that an active pedagogy is particularly important in teaching Media Studies. In his view such a pedagogy leads to participative interaction in a certain learning setting. This can be achieved through the vehicle of:-

**"using an interactive multimedia (I.A.M.) system in the classroom (which) has several advantages. One of the strongest advantages that interactive multimedia offer the educational system as a whole is its flexibility. It can be shaped to meet the needs of different students and their different learning styles. Teachers who know how to use it can customise programs (programmes) to meet the needs of certain individuals and groups. They can design programs (programmes) for use by individuals, small groups, or whole classes. Best of all, Interactive Multimedia (IAM) presents information in a number of media, thus involving students aurally, visually, and kinetically" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent BQ gave interesting views on media teaching practice which goes beyond the boundary of the classroom. He called on Arab Educationists to adopt an interactive pedagogy on the societal level in

order to achieve a participative and practical media learning. He raised the awareness that:-

> **"Media Education is mainly about the necessity to media-educate everybody in the society, not necessarily only the young, to be aware of what they read, listen to and watch. Accordingly, Media Education is everybody's responsibility. It is not limited to merely schools and teachers. A parent can play a crucial role in the home in media educating his/her children about the newspapers they read, the songs they listen to and the films they watch. This is a part of the child's upbringing as well as it is an Islamic responsibility" (appendix 1: 645).**

Having stated that this respondent alerted the relevant authorities in the Arab World and in Qatar particularly, to introduce Media Studies' teaching. He urged for:-

**"the need for teaching Media Studies to both beginning and experienced teachers and on a wider scale in higher education and in secondary schools" (appendix 1: 645).**

Respondent BQ regretted the fact that the relevant authorities neglected such an crucial subject in modern education. He manifested his feelings:-

**"There are few universities in the Arab World which teach Media Studies except most notably Egypt, where there is a Media Studies Department within Cairo University. As far as Media Studies is concerned, it is a great pity that our schools, especially secondary schools, do not teach such a crucial subject" (appendix 1: 645).**

He, in particular seemed to be surprised that a country like the State of Qatar which is so susceptible to media technology does not include

Media Studies in its National Curriculum. He cited the incentive to include the subject:-

> **"In a country like Qatar, where there are 700 television sets for every 1000 people, 650 video sets for the same number of people and, more importantly, there are 200 receiving television dishes for every 1000 people similarly especially those between 5-18 years old, have very high exposure to this cultural phenomenon. The secondary school curriculum at least ought to respond to this cultural situation. Out of the huge sums of money which Gulf television agencies pay for mainly American programmes, some of this money ought to be saved for researching into the influence of the media on people, specifically on the young. Money also should be used for researching and analysing the content of these programmes. What is happening now and**

**what has been happening since the 1970s is that the Gulf television agencies pay lavishly for American series and then the censors censor those programmes. This results in removing some parts of them, on sheer claims and hypothetical observations" (appendix 1: 645).**

In his view, if Media Studies is introduced to the 'classroom practice' at the secondary level the students in the State of Qatar:-

**"will be able to learn, among other skills, television content analyses which will transform our students from being consumers of television to analysts and people who can critique" (appendix 1: 645).**

Because of his interest in 'folk media' as has already been shown respondent CQ had little to say on the central meaning and concept of 'Media Studies practice' 'and 'Being participative as an active

pedagogy'. However, he seemed to link the teaching of Media Studies at schools with radical cultural change. He stated:-

> **"Teaching Media Studies in schools would be a cultural breakthrough" (appendix 1: 645).**

## 6.2.1.5 Analytical Comment

Respondent AQ's notion of using an interactive multimedia system in the classroom was clearly derived from the work of the American pioneers of the mid 1950s, most notably Dale. According to Sim (1977) Dale can be regarded as the pioneer of interactive methods in using the newspaper in the classroom.

Dale published in 1940 a book entitled *How to Read a Newspaper.* This book was considered by many American teachers of Dale's time as a landmark publication and it introduced dramatic changes to the world of teaching in relation to implementing media in education **(Sim, in *UNESCO*[3], 1977: 75).**

The reason why this respondent did not talk specifically about media and education in its Qatari or Arabic contexts is related to the fact that Media Education has not yet made significant progress in the Arabic World. Nevertheless, the medium of film and cinema has been used in most Qatari schools since the early 1960s as an assistance to History. The purpose here was to alert students about certain areas of Arabic interests (e.g., Suez Crisis, the Six-day War, the Yom Kippur War).

Respondent BQ has highlighted the notion that 'Media Studies practice' would enable the students to be transformed into a conscious audience in dealing with the mass media on one hand and conscious learners on the other hand. He is in this sense, in agreement with a number of contemporary liberal writers in education **(e.g., Freire, 1985, Carr, 1992 and the respondents in chapter 5).**

To be conscious of what you come cross on a daily basis, to be creative and aware and alerted are the prime principles of education. In Freire's terms:-

> **"conscientization, like education, is specifically and exclusively a human process" (Freire 1985: 68)**

These writers dealt with education as a political force. In other words, education is expected from this stand point, to alert the students to become critical of what they watch, listen to and read. Freire (1985) calls on people as **"conscious beings" (Freire 1985: 68)** to be participants with the world rather than merely living in it.

Respondent BQ has used Freire's terms of 'transformation', when he referred to Media Studies as a tool of transformation the students from being consumers into critical participants. Freire (1985) stated that:-

> **"It is as conscious beings that men are not only in the world but with the world, together with other men. Only men, as open beings, are able to achieve the complex operation of simultaneously transforming the world by their action and grasping and expressing the world's reality in their creative language" (Freire 1985: 68).**

This is how Freire (1985) explained his theory of **'Cultural Action and Conscientization.'** He spurs people to be full participants in their

global culture, interacting with it as partners and taking into account that their indigenous and regional culture is a contributing to the mother culture in which all human being are conscious and aware of the fact that all people are equal participants. Freire (1985) defines Conscientization as it:-

> **"refers to the process in which men, not as recipients' but as knowing subjects achieve a deepening awareness both of the sociocultural reality that shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality" (Freire 1985: 93).**

In other words, Freire (1985) counsels people to relate their understanding of their social world to the wider surrounding world in which they live, work and function (i.e., the socio-historical political and cultural conditions). These notions have also been discussed in chapter 4 in relation to the validity of this research. This objective perspective would enable them to reflect on their experiences with developments and events outside the boundaries of their own intimate social world. He emphasises that:-

**"only beings who can reflect upon the fact that they are determined are capable of freeing themselves. Their reflectiveness results not just in a vague and uncommitted awareness but in the exercise of a profoundly transforming action upon the determining reality. Consciousness of and action upon reality are, therefore, inseparable constituents of the transforming act by which men become beings of relations" (Freire 1985: 68).**

In this sense Freire (1985) holds a contrast between animals who, according to him live **in** the world and human beings who live **with** the world. He stresses that:-

**"By their characteristic reflection, intentionality, temporality and transcendence, men's consciousness and action are distinct from the mere contacts of animals with the world" (Freire 1985: 68).**

Respondent CQ dealt with the concept and central meaning of 'Media Studies' and 'Being participative as an active pedagogy' from a different and interesting perspective which is cultural. He described the conceivable introduction of Media Studies practice and 'being participative as an active pedagogy' into the Qatari secondary schools as **a cultural breakthrough.** It is interesting because the mass media are a substantial cultural component in every day life from one viewpoint and an important element of the socio-cultural conditions from another viewpoint.

In this sense, he is in agreement with a number of educational writers such as, Freire, 1985, the respondents in chapter 5, and respondent BQ in this chapter whose discourse has been analysed. The cultural understanding of the mass media is essential for it enables people to reflect critically on what they perceive from the mass media. Freire (1985) firmly believes that:-

> **"the reflectiveness and finality of men's relationships with the world would not be possible if these relationships did not occur in an historical as well as physical context" (Freire 1985: 70).**

Hence, the mass media are in the core accompaniment of the socio-historical context. Freire (1985) stresses the significance of "**critical reflection" (Freire, 1985: 70).** The custody of such a cultural ability enables people to be culturally conscious and consequently active in participating with fellow human beings within the international setting.

In Freire's terms **cultural action** which derives from the ability of **conscientization** is one of the major outcomes of critical education. In his view that critical education yields **conscious** people who are capable of embarking on the attempts to push for the **cultural action** in its various forms (e.g., political economical and educational reforms or changes). These cultural actions may lead to social action which is itself a cultural product like the mass media and other societal phenomena.

According to Al-Misnad (1984) during the 1920's a number of educated men in Bahrain, a Gulf state, rebelled against the ruler of Bahrain in favour of allowing Bahraini women to go to school. She also states that because of the increasing numbers in educated males and females the governments in the Arabian Gulf began to introduce political economic and social reforms since the 1960. Al-Misnad (1984) has related this occurrence to cultural awareness as a result of being educated **(Al-Misnad, 1984: 29-30).**

In the light of understanding Freire's philosophy (1985) one could argue that education, especially in its critical way, often leads to enlightenment which in turn leads to cultural awareness or **conscientization** which often leads to cultural action. This was certainly the case in the Gulf States as Al-Misnad has implied.

Respondent CQ's notion of transformation is critical and radical in relation to critical education though he did not elaborate adequately on this point for apparently political considerations.

## 6.2.1.6 Entertainment

Respondent AQ suspected the notion that the mass media's main role in a society is sheer entertainment. He elaborated the view that although the mass media:-

> **"used for entertainment, the mass media are always more than mere entertainment" (appendix 1: 645).**

He pointed out that the mass media are educational tools whether:-

**"readers, listeners and viewers seek entertainment or enlightenment" (appendix 1: 645).**

BQ took the view that the **"entertainment industry"**, using Thompson's terms (1965) is not necessarily responsible for social decline and deterioration in educational standards. People and students in the State of Qatar learn from films and series such as:-

**"'Sesame Street, 'Dallas', 'Rocky', 'Rambo'" (appendix 1: 645).**

This respondent considered watching such films as a vehicle of understanding and becoming introspective to other people's cultures. This principle is essential in reflecting the image of Islam:-

**"which is a way of life, flexible religion and therefore, it does not in my view prevent Moslims from being open to other national cultures" (appendix 1: 645).**

CQ though he did not see any mischief or evil in watching Western mass media's production he called on Moslims to do so while bearing in mind one of the certainties in Islamic philosophy which is pursuing enjoyment from, say an entertaining programme should be for a purpose of learning:-

> **"any source of enjoyment should be directed towards that initial message of Islam" (appendix 1: 645).**

In his view, this learning would enable the Qatari and Moslim students to produce their own media which:-

> **"constitutes the real role of the Moslim viewer of American television, especially the films, series and the music" (appendix 1: 645).**

This respondent urged Moslims to be active by producing the Islamic music which is directed to the role of a human being on this earth (i.e.,

constructing the planet for a better life for all fellow human beings). He clarified:-

> **"There is a misconception, held by some people in the West, that Islam forbids music ... we should help our students, in the same vein to make their music, which some Qatari students have done. Their music is popular here and in the region. Islam, as you know, rejects music which arouses the desire of the young in particular, the music which encourages male and female to dance together as it happens in the West ... We also see this quite a lot on television....Islam forbids such a thing for its long term pervasive bad influence on the well-being of the society. Such a mixture between two sexes with the aid of drink, loud and desirable music, girls in indecent clothes in our definition, is certainly leading to adultery**

**which leads to illegitimate children, to diseases, Aids, etc." (appendix 1: 645).**

## 6.2.1.7 Analytical Comment

AQ's rejection of the claim that the main role of the mass media is sheer entertainment is based on the belief that people learn from media entertainment.

In his research on the uses and gratifications of Qatari students at the University of Qarar in relation to the importance of Qatari television, discussed earlier Basher (1984), emphasised the connection between information and entertainment which the students acquire from the Qatari television.

Boyd and Straubhaar (1985), referred to earlier detected that Home Video Cassette Recorders (HVCRS) were potentially advantageous media in the Gulf States for learning and obtaining information about the Western culture. This devotion for learning from such a medium, in their view is evident providing that the people in the Gulf States have an open access to modern media technology.

Respondent BQ's assertions on entertainment seemed to be liberal and in line with those British respondents in chapters 5 as well as respondent CQ in this chapter to a certain degree.

CQ's flexible views on Islam and the West derive from the heart of Islamic philosophy. In a recent article named 'The Flexibility Of Islam' published in Al-Sharq Al-Awsat (The Middle East), an Arabic Language Newspaper stationed in London, Al-Karadawi (1995) states that Islam:-

> **"is not only adaptable and flexible as a way of life but also sympathetic and understanding of other nations' cultures. Islam urges Moslims to accept and respect other people's way of life as much as they expect the others to accept and respect theirs. It is in the core of Islam to approach and criticise other people's cultures from their cultures' own point of view. Because of this perspective which was highly held, the Prophet and his successors spread Islam till it reached the boundaries of France and China. When**

**the Moslims abandoned this essential principle they distanced themselves and the others from Islam" (Al-Karadawi, January, 13, 1995: 8).**

What Al-Karadawi stressed could be described as an important cultural **conscientization**, borrowing Freire's terms, in his cultural approach into other cultures. This approach clearly shows Islam as the ultimate **conscientization**. Because of its awareness and comprehension of the "**sociocultural reality" (of all human beings) "that shapes (the lives of human beings) and their capacity to transform that reality (Freire, 1985: 71-93),** in Freire's definition. In Islam this belief is based on the notion that the main role of man on earth is to be God's Khalifa, the great creator's vehicle and his successor to build and endure life on this earth. Allah stated in the holy Qur'an addressing Adam and the human being in him:-

**"We have appointed a successor on the earth" (the Holy Qur'an, 30: 2).**

This role in Islam could be described as **cultural action** based on cultural **conscientization.**

## 6.2.1.8 Realism

AQ referred to the mass media depiction of people such as the social life of the Eastenders in the British popular soap opera and the portrayal of suggested social interaction by the media such as showing people drinking together and other forms of social interaction. He said that the mass media attempt to impose on people:-

> **"certain social interactions and showing certain things about the nature and value of the different groups in the society" (appendix 1: 645).**

This respondent stressed the conception that American television's products misconstrues the reality of social life in American society. He detailed:-

> **"to prove that the messages of television, for instance, are distinctive and deviant from 'social reality' on several key points, yet persisted exposure to them leads to its adoption as a consensual view of society.**

**The main evidence for the Cultivation theory comes from systematic analyses of American television carried out over several years and showing consistent distinctions of reality in respect of family, work and roles, education, violence and crime. Although this might be true only of American society, the fact that a great deal of American television productions are extensively aired on Arab television channels in a phenomenon called 'the Americanisation of Arab television' causes a lot of concern for us" (appendix 1: 645).**

BQ identified two types of social reality. The one which is developed by the parents and the mass media's reality. He referred to the significance of the parents' role in relation to their children's viewing of television. BQ said:-

**"A parent can play a crucial role in the home" (appendix 1: 645).**

Apparently, because of the claimed confusion children have between reality and fantasy, this respondent called for:-

**"analysing the content of these programmes" (appendix 1: 645).**

BQ seemed concerned about children becoming mixed up between reality and fantasy. He warned:-

> **"Media such as television is such a large window on other cultures ... and we as teachers, parents etc. can make sure that our children, our students, do not simply imitate the representation in those American media products" (appendix 1: 645).**

CQ claimed that the folk media which mainly derives from the Islamic media, represent reality in a more appropriate way than the modern mass media of communication. He declares:-

> **"The folk media have always also played an essential role in the family where**

**children grow up and in the school where they learn" (appendix 1: 645).**

This respondent was alarmed by the media bombardment people in Qatar are susceptible to from every where:-

**"the amount of television transmission we perceive from all over the world" (appendix 1: 645).**

He faced his students with the cultural reality that they are Moslims, hence, they should be aware and conscious of what they perceive from the mass media in order not to become mixed up or confused but critical, alerted and culturally conscientized:-

**"We should help our students to realise that they are committed Moslims" (appendix 1: 645).**

This respondent alerted his students to deal with the imported mass media for beneficial virtues such as learning or improving their English:-

**"to realise that Islam is for all human beings on earth, therefore, they should be allowed, for instance, to watch American television, as it may be a source of good messages and they can improve their English" (appendix 1: 645).**

## 6.2.1.9 Analytical Comment

AQ's views on the concept of 'realism' in the media seem to be inspired by the Cultivation theory initiated by Gerbner, a teacher of Mass Communication at the Annenberg School of Communication in the American State of Pennsylvania.

Respondent AQ also stressed the notion that American television twists the reality of social life in American society. As far as this particular point is concerned he was conformed to respondent B in Chapter 5 on the notion that the mass media of communication may be called mirrors of society, but they are distorting mirrors.

AQ had taken for granted that young viewers in the State of Qatar, as they are often the centre of concern, could be affected by the depiction

of violence in American imported films. He also referred to the possible bad influence of 'Dallas', for example, on girls in Qatar.

Whilst these observations may be valid to a certain degree, in the case of some viewers the researcher's own observational data propose that the patently deeply-ingrained and solid Islamic upbringing and educational values among the young stop them from mimicking the values and style of American mass media productions. Such a sweeping generalization about the presupposed power of television 'Americanisation' could be allied with considerations of the observed moral panic in the Qatari society as has been discussed earlier.

Nonetheless, Basher (1984), as has been referred to in this chapter, found that the Qatari television is a potentially beneficial medium of mass communication to the Qatari students he studied at the University of Qatar. The students rely on it for aiding them with their courses and they also depend on it for improving their English, among other things discussed earlier.

BQ had emphasised the crucial role the parents ought to employ in regard to their children viewing of television. Apparently, he believes that children may become confused and mixed up between reality and fantasy.

## 6.2.1.10 Importance of the media versus influence of the media

AQ placed an emphasis on the importance of training Media Studies' teachers in order to alert their students to the 'presumed' mass media's influence:-

> **"the importance of teaching teachers how media work and influence their audiences, notably students" (appendix 1: 645).**

This respondent assumed that the mass media are influential. Thus, he urged the teachers to enable their students to be conscious and alert minded:-

> **"to be aware of what they read, listen to and watch" (appendix 1: 645).**

CQ has sharply criticised the manipulation of the mass media for political propaganda:-

**"For the sake of ruling Egypt by a combination of secular philosophy, Nasser crushed the Islamic movement by 1965. Thus the media, especially radio and cinema, were employed for propaganda purposes to promote mainly Nasser as the pioneer of pan-Arabism" (appendix 1: 645).**

### 6.2.1.11 Analytical Comment

AQ's notion of connecting the importance of training to the claim that mass media are influential has been highly controversial since the days of Plato. Plato removed poets, as an aspect of the popular culture of his time, from his teaching curriculum, for, he and other scholars of his time carefully, thought about both poetry and novels to be superficial, time-wasting, and even corrupting.

As has already been stated in Chapter 1 and 5, the mid-nineteenth century cheap shows and theatre were claimed to have a corrupting power on the young. In the 20th century by the same token, cinema, jazz music, radio and at the present television and its joint innovations

(e.g., video and global and cable television) have been stereotyped as vandalistic and corrupting to immature people **(Kumar, 1989: 38).**

BQ, though he apparently assumed that the mass media are influential, stimulates the teachers to enable their students to be critical consumers of the mass media, aware, conscious and to reach the degree of **conscientization** in Freire's terms. BQ, in this sense echoes Barthes (1973) who has beautifully, written a powerful piece of advice to his fellow teachers:-

> **"... the goal of literary work ... is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but the producer of the text" (Barthes, 1973: 125).**

The researcher is of the opinion that Barthes' advice should be developed by all teachers. As has been seen in chapters 5, this chapter and as will be shown in chapter 7, the teachers who took part in this work, have clearly reinforced this notion of co-operative and democratic education. They have accordingly, cast aside the authoritarian notion of education **(see appendices 1 & 2: 385-495).**

CQ's criticism of utilizing the mass media for political propaganda by the former regime in Egypt has a legacy from the past. For example, the Frankfort scholars, who fled Germany in the aftermath of Hitler's seizure of power in Germany in 1933, attacked Hitler and his propaganda Minister for manipulating the masses.

Hitler, in Nazi Germany extensively, used the power of the mass media as a tool of propaganda from 1933 until his fall in 1945 **(Glover, 1984: 2-6).**

The United States Of America during the First World War is another example of exploiting the mass media (in this case the film industry):-

**"to discover how effective government propaganda films had been in indoctrinating and training American soldiers to have the 'right attitudes'" (Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 10).**

## 6.3 Summary and Discussion

The phenomenon of 'Americanisation' of television in Arab states which was commented on by respondent AQ in this chapter has been studied by Boyd and Najai (1984) in relation to adolescent television viewing in Saudi Arabia. They found that watching television is popular among teenagers in Saudi Arabia, Saudi males liking Western programmes best, while non-Saudi Arabs and Saudi females preferred Arab programmes **(Boyd & Najai, 1984: 295).** This demonstrated interesting gender differences. Both Saudi and Qatari males, most notably the young, preferred Western-American programmes because of the portrayal of attractive life styles. This common interest derives from the similarities between Qatari and Saudi females, mentioned earlier.

In Qatar it has also been observed that most Qatari females prefer to watch Arabic, Egyptian, Kuwaiti, Syrian and Jordanian soap operas. This is especially true for middle-aged and old women **(Basher, 1984: 2o).**

The popularity of television and its main joint innovation (i.e., the Video Home Cassette Recorders, HVCRs) in the State of Qatar was highlighted by respondent BQ who asserted that, up to the time of interviewing there were 700 television sets for every 1000 people and 650 HVCRs for the same number of people, while a decade ago Basher (1984) asserted that there were 460 television sets for every 1000

people. He associated this figure with the importance of television in the lives of Qatari people. He found out that The State of Qatar ranks the first in the world in terms of possessing television sets **(Basher, 1984: 20).**

According to the Open University (1977) the number of television sets in Brazil in the early 1970s was 68 for every 1000 population. The Open University made a comparison between Brazil, as a Latin American country, and Indonesia, as an Asian country, where the latter had, up to 1977, according to the Open University, 0.8 sets per 1000.

The Open University was not well informed about other Asian countries. Qatar, as an Asian country, was completely ignored and neglected by the Open University analysis. The Open University research has been very limited.

The Open University claimed that television in Latin America has been more 'successful' than in many countries in the Third World (e.g., African and Asian countries). The Open University researchers such as Bennett, Blumler and others, base this claim on research into the popularity of television in some countries in the Third World. If they had conducted their survey in the Gulf States they would have had a

very different and more comprehensive picture **(The Open University, 1977: 43).**

While respondents BQ and CQ discounted the impact of American films from their point of view (they believe in the importance of the mass media rather than the influence of the mass media as the respondents in chapter 5 and Basher, 1984 do), respondent AQ sharply criticised the 'Americanisation' of Arab television. This notion is often associated with the notion of 'cultural imperialism' which was dismissed by respondents BQ and CQ, as has been stated earlier. It was, also rejected by respondents B and C in chapter 5. Liebes and Katz (1990), also emphasised, to a great extent their rejection of such a notion. They

note:-

> **"Critical studies of the diffusion of American television programmes overseas have labelled this process 'cultural imperialism' as if there were no question but that the hegemonic message the analyst discerns in the text is transferred to the defenceless minds of viewers the world over for the self-serving interests of**

**the economy and ideology of the exporting country" (Liebes & Kats, 1990: 4).**

This view has been widely expressed by many cultural, educational and media researchers, as has been shown in the last chapters. Liebes and Katz continue by saying that:-

**"but labelling something imperialistic is not the same as proving it is. To prove that 'Dallas' is an imperialistic imposition, one would have to show (1) that there is a message incorporated in the program (programme) that is designed to profit American interests overseas, (2) that the message is decoded by the receiver in the way it was encoded by the sender, and (3) that it is accepted uncritically by the viewers and allowed to seep into their culture. Let us assume that a critical reading of 'Dallas' would, in fact, reveal to the analyst that a central message is that 'the rich are unhappy'. Is this a self-**

**interested message from the point of view of the encoders? Perhaps so, if one assumes that the producers are working in the cause of class or country to create contentment among the disadvantaged of the world rather than to encourage enterprise and initiative and risk frustration and revolution. It may be, of course, that the programme both encourages enterprise and consoles those who are unable to succeed" (Liebes & Kats, 1990: 4).**

Most of that has been clearly stated by respondent CQ in this chapter. It has been also highlighted by the respondents in chapter 5 and chapter 7 in relation to the importance of the media, on one hand, and learning from both the media entertainment, and the social representation through the media on the other.

In my view, the cultural folk media in the State of Qatar, which traditionally derive almost completely from Islamic folk cultural media,

can be observed to play a far more crucial role in children's and adolescents' social learning than the perceived role of the modern electronic media of mass communication. Although this area will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter 8, it is perhaps worth touching on it here in order to conclude the discussion in this chapter.

Islamic cultural folk media in the State of Qatar can be traced particularly to the period of the pearl diving industry and probably a long time before that. In that period women and children were said to emerge from their homes on the shores of Qatar singing while waving with palm tree branches to welcome their loved ones who had been aboard the diving ships for months **(Al-Misnad, 1984: 42).**

Despite the fact that this industry died away in the 1940s, for reasons which will be dealt with in Chapter 8, the sea and the pearl diving industry still dominate most of the imagery of the young painters, playwrights and poets in Qatar.

The other important facet of Islamic cultural folk media is the 'majalis' which can be described as private guest rooms owned by rich people **(see Al-Kobaisi, 1984: 20-21).**

In my view, these social contexts have good and positive effects on children's social learning. Many fathers in Qatar are traditionally honoured to escort their growing children to attend these 'majalis' in the evening at least on a weekly basis.

These Islamic folk media culture educate the youth to be well disciplined (e.g., respect the elderly, listen to people who are older than them, talk about different topics as has already been discussed, and sit down respectably in front of people).

The culture of Islamic folk media teaches young people in their late teenage years to be punctual for prayer and committed to their Islam at the mosque, to make sure they are clean physically and washed properly and completely to listen with carefulness to the Imam (a scholar who leads the prayers), to greet other people while entering the mosque with a quiet and decent voice, to remove shoes at the doorstep of the mosque, to read out from the Holy Qur'an with a beautiful voice, to become modest in his way of entering the mosque.

To succinctly sum up the latter one could say that, both traditional folk media and Islamic folk media culture have a deeply rooted and ingrained predominance in cultural life and it can be argued that their effect on

social learning is more positive than that of modern electronic mass media.

## 6.4 Generating grounded theory from the respondents' accounts

**Detailed analysis of the respondents' accounts has shown the central meanings and concepts in Media Education which are important to them.**

**The question which must now be asked is what sort of grounded theory emerges from these accounts and how does it reproduce or differ from the theory of cultural action and conscientization produced by the higher education teachers in London?**

**In generating the theory of the Qatar respondents it must be noted that they did not have a direct responsibility for teacher education and for school pedagogy and therefore, they had less to say about issues of 'classroom practice'. On the other hand, they had strong theoretical positions on the importance of Media Education in Qatar and upon the need to find a negotiated cultural solution to the problem of media imperialism.**

**Their theory was therefore, also a theory of cultural action and conscientization but with a distinctive Islamic and Qatari emphasis. This theory may be called Islamic cultural action and conscientization in Media Education. The features of this theory are as follows:-**

**1. Strong confidence in Islamic culture and values.**

**2. Recognition of Islamic culture and values as being dynamic (i.e., they can change according to circumstances as long as these circumstances do not tend to violate the fundamentals of Islam).**

**3. Not to censor but to make people critically aware of the messages they receive and to help in relating them to Islamic values.**

**4. Commitment to an active pedagogy within a structured frame work.**

**5. A notion of cultural production of their own forms of media through a negotiated cultural relationship and the development of indigenous folk media.**

**Those elements of this theory grounded in the discourses of Qatar's respondents had clearly manifested a commonality of approach: a critical awareness and intellectual critical orientation popular in the West but within an Islamic cultural critical perspective. A major Islamic educational principle urges people to open up new horizons on other cultures' experiences. This helps Moslim teachers to verify, revive and formulate new issues and applications for essential Islamic theories and to allow for a certain form of cultural collaboration with the West. Most notably, this principle arises in relation to enabling the Qatari students to transform their understanding of Islam as a complete, dynamic and flexible way of life by becoming not only critical consumers of the Western media but also critical producers of their own unique Islamic media texts. It is a new and important necessity in a world dominated by global Western mass media transmission. This Islamic critical outlook on the West does not aim at reinforcing the long history of moral panic about the media, the traditional suspicion of popular taste and the withering away of indigenous culture, as much as it attempts to explore and develop this necessary aspect of cultural collaboration.**

**A central crucial point had also emerged from their discourses that there was no conceptual and reasonable justification why the subject**

of Media Studies and Media Education should, as it has been developing in the United Kingdom since the early 1930s, not be freely able to address Qatari and Islamic issues. The Islamic media holds historically an ideology of providing the media with considerable independence. This was always the case in the days of the Prophet and his later successors through the medium of the mosque and the private Islamic circles.

Because the secular regimes in some Moslim countries do not follow this line (i.e., they have imposed censorship) the rift began between them and what has come to be known as 'the fundamentalists'.

Grounded in the respondents' discourses was also the rejection of the Marxist notion that mass media is in servitude to secular and capitalist interests. It is interesting that Islam, fourteen centuries ago, had emphasised the importance of independence and the ability to implement a critical stance towards societal events and phenomena .(Al-Karadawi, January, 13, 1995: 8).

Such critical inspection of media being recommended here by the Qatari respondents, could play a vital role in the procedures of

**contemporary Qatari society, assisting with the responsible choice of consumer goods, helping to prevent dishonesty, promoting innovation and the maintenance of the indigenous culture. Islam consistently inspires people to adopt and to demonstrate an informed understanding of other cultures' affairs. This approach should result in the creation of critical and competent individuals. These two features are major qualities enabling people to cope in a world full of a variety of experiences of increasing developments in mass media's technology. It is an active Islamic pedagogy in relation to the world and to the media threat of media imperialism.**

**Islamic education has, since the rise of Islam in the 7th century, maintained a critical, academic approach based on knowledge collaboration with advanced nations for the good of humanity. By relating this existing Islamic principle to Media Education and Media Studies one could reflect on the respondents' discourses by stating that, the Islamic and cultural form of Media Education and Media Studies which has been always taught at the University of Qatar alongside Western forms of Media Education and Media Studies provides a twin focus and a strategic interdisciplinary subject. From this wider context this type of media (folk and Islamic) would derive its distinctiveness. This notion held by the**

respondents is also based on the Islamic belief that only through making Islam popular internationally will non-Moslims be able to make sense of its principles. Thus, with the rapid technological innovations in mass media global transmission, the world has become a global village. Qatar in the view of these respondents ought to produce its own mass media's folk and Islamic forms of exportable productions. This method, they believed, is one of the best ways of eradicating the presumed moral panic about media imperialism in Qatar.

Grounded in their discourses another major conceptualisation was the necessity to inform and train their students at the Department of Media Studies to catch up with the rapid changes in mass media's innovative technology. This theme emerged from their discourses as a semi-autonomous driving force to further the development of Media Studies at the University of Qatar. The respondents demonstrated a global cultural view about Media Education which is experiencing a distinctive and exciting cultural debate. One major feature of this experience is that Media Education has become an increasingly important subject in higher education while at the same time performing greater social and academic roles. While the critical discourses of the respondents in which their Islamic form of

**Media Education is grounded, had shown a strong confidence in their Islamic cultural capital, they had equally shown a clear, comprehensive, coherent strategic vision of a negotiated cultural relationship with the West in relation to media imperialism. The main issues which in their view ought to be the focus of this relationship were:-**

**a. The two-way flow of objective and academic understanding, respect and mutual recognition by both Moslims and Westerners of each other's cultures.**

**Both sides should recognise the fact that there are political, economic interests and above all cultural interests which link them.**

**Islam encourages Moslims to maintain the development and growth of these interests while it urges them to protect those interests against any cultural threat.**

**Islam also calls on Moslims to make known their willingness to safeguard Western interests where appropriate without feeling embarrassed or ashamed. The failure to do so by some Moslim**

**countries has paved the way for a failure to win the West's sympathy and support.**

**It is extremely, urgent in the view of the Qatari respondents for Moslims to realise that international relationships with the West in mass media, economy, politics, security and culture cannot be based only on moral considerations but also on common interests. For Moslims, to be liked by the West is completely irrelevant, because it is not a prerequisite condition in dealing with the West.**

**b. A better understanding in the West of Islam. This was also a significant and major issue for the respondents. It has two main interrelated aspects. First, in their view, educated, aware and conscious Moslim devotees ought to represent Islam via the Islamic media appropriately. This has to happen through constructive, productive and coherent formulas in evaluation, illustration and conviction. The West should derive their conception of Islam from this cultural representation via media production in the Arab states.**

**c. A better understanding ought to be achieved of the need for civilizational and political variation all over the globe while bearing in mind that this variation has social, cultural and global aspects and**

it has differences between religions and ideologies which cannot be ignored and neglected. It is right and realistic in the view of the Qatari respondents to abandon the notion of imposing a single civilizational and political model on the whole world. This notion of global understanding clearly reflects the theory of Islamic cultural action and conscientization.

Islam takes into consideration that the objective, clear and comprehensive vision is a civilizational necessity. Islamic Cultural action based on conscientization and awareness is a new Islamic pillar.[4] It is not less important in any way than the well known five pillars of Islam.

Islam is a religion but it is also a cultural method which establishes the scientific thinking on foundations which link the comprehensive vision to the process of detailing and practising the particulars. This is an Islamic cultural and scientific feature.

The conscientized Moslim in the view of the respondents should not approach events, phenomena and developments as separate entities. Islam urges Moslims to comprehend the planet by bearing in mind

**that this comprehension is based on the comprehensive approach into the general laws of human existence.**

**Islam also in the view of the respondents inspires people to comprehend society by realising that this comprehension is based on cognitive understanding of the social laws, rules and norms which control and interpret phenomena and events. It also urges people to approach the concept of Islam in terms of understanding the relationships and integrating of the fundamentals of Islam, its purposes and its faculties. If Moslims fail to approach Islam as one unit, Islam becomes inappropriately misunderstood. This explains why some Moslims' activities are described by the Western media as 'extremist' because these activities are carried out without a true understanding of the concept of Islam.**

**In the view of the Qatari respondents. it is the role of Media Education to develop this concept and it is the role of the mass media in Moslim countries to popularize this wider and deeper concept of Islam. The approach should be by cultural action and conscientization in Media Education. This would lead in the view of the respondents to a successful relationship with the West or at least**

**it would stimulate both sides to negotiate one in the sphere of culture, mass media and other social, political and economic relations.**

# CHAPTER 7

# MEDIA STUDIES: THE PERSPECTIVES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

## 7.1 Introduction

Having analysed the accounts of both London and Doha higher educational institutional teachers, the accounts of five secondary school teachers in London and Washington (a town in Tyne and Wear) will be analysed in this chapter.

The intention of this analysis is threefold. First, to clarify and elaborate the central meanings used by these respondents in their accounts of the role of Media Studies in British secondary schooling. Second, to note the extent to which they have been influenced by the higher education theorists or the extent to which they have developed their own theoretical position and their own practice. Third, to generate grounded theory from the respondents' accounts.

## 7.2 About the sample

The sample in this chapter consists of five respondents. Two of the teachers were from two different secondary schools in London. These two schools are among very few secondary schools in England and Wales which teach Media Studies as a separate subject. The other three respondents are teachers at a secondary school in Washington, Tyne and Wear. This school is also among very few secondary schools which teach Media Studies as a separate subject. It is perhaps important to note that such a move is not in accordance with the National Curriculum which does not include Media Studies as a subject.

## 7.3 The central meanings and concepts

The respondents in this chapter described their social setting through emphasising the following concepts:-

*** Media Studies and Media Education in relation to the following contexts:-**

**a. In the context of the curricula.**

**b. In the context of stereotypes.**

**c. In the context of technology.**

*** classroom practice and being participative as an active pedagogy.**

*** becoming critical.**

*** media imperialism.**

*** entertainment**

*** realism.**

*** importance of the media versus influence of the media**

## 7.3.1 Note to the analysis

The respondents' discourses in this chapter were in many ways similar. There were two reasons for this similarity. First, they were all practitioners of Media Education and Media Studies in the few schools in England which are concerned with the subject. Second, they were all students in one way or another of the

higher institutional teachers in chapter 5. Therefore, the respondents represented a generation of teachers making a critical and practical response to the media theory of the 1970s and 1980s.

## 7.3.2 Media Studies in the context of the curricula

As early as 1950, according to the London institutional respondents of Chapter 5, particularly respondents C, D and A, Media Education generally and Media Studies specifically had been permeating across curricula, serving as an aid to other subjects **(see for example, appendix 1: 674-675).**

In the State of Qatar, as has been said in chapter 6, the means of Media Education had also been permeating across the curricula throughout all educational phases. These means are termed as explanatory 'wasael al-edah,' which means aids for enabling the students to understand the subjects they study adequately. Respondent AT believed that Media Studies should be part of the education of all teachers:-

**"... it is important for the teachers to learn about the subject of Media Studies because it is the kind of discipline that can inform good practice in other**

**subjects as well - I would say certainly in History and English, Sociology, and the study of the humanities generally" (appendix 2: 686).**

He believed that the importance of television, as both an educational medium and as a source of information, had been overemphasised and oversimplified:-

**"Television is a very important influence on the way people get their information, but it is not the only way people get information. People process information as well. The ideological message in the text doesn't necessarily transfer wholesale to the audience. I think it is a far more complex process than that" (appendix 2: 687).**

Respondent AT also agreed with the institutional scholars of Chapter 5 that educating students by using television is not efficient on its own. It has to be an 'assistant' to the real teacher:-

**"I would say it has got to happen with something else. You can't just put on a television programme**

and expect them to learn from it. The modality of the programme is less than a real-life teacher for a start. I would say that it has to happen in tandem with something else, as part of an overall unit. If you think of the Open University, that is taught through television programmes, and I suppose that works, but most television isn't like that. Most television isn't intended as educational, is it? I would say that an argument that states that the mass media are good educators is a kind of an argument which is saying 'Let's wind down schools then. We don't need schools.' That is a dangerous argument. I don't think that is true. That is a very asocial model of learning. It's as if they will have us learning in boxes or on computers at home. I think that is wrong. I think that misses the point about what is going on socially in education in classes, when people are talking to each other" (appendix 2: 692).

Respondent BT had spoken about his school's attempts to teach Media Studies as an independent subject:-

> **"inscribed in the English curriculum. Everyone is supposed to be doing some Media Studies, which has never been there before, so that is a positive thing. What that means in practice may be very different from place to place, so it is hard to say. In this school we have had Media Studies as a separate subject for a number of years so we are in a fortunate position. It is different with a lot of other places" (appendix 2: 698).**

This respondent, although he seemed optimistic about the relationship between Media Studies and the National Curriculum, had raised questions about political intervention:-

> **"I think the National Curriculum could go in a variety of different directions. Potentially it is a positive thing. It just depends how much interference and how much imposition there**

**actually is from central government. I'm always optimistic about things, so I would say potentially positive" (appendix 2: 698).**

Respondent BT had recalled his experience in teaching the subject:-

**"I have always done it independently, so I do prefer that. We now run a course for GCSE, where they do a joint GCSE in English and Media Studies. They are assessed separately but they are taught in an independent way. Effectively we do both things. We teach A-level Media Studies separately and previously we did CSE separately. In the Lower School we have Media Studies within English, so I think the two things can co-exist" (appendix 2: 699).**

This respondent believed that Media Studies should be a discrete subject on its own, available for all levels of students at the secondary school:-

**"I think Media Studies should be in schools as a discrete subject, available as a discrete subject. Teaching it within English lower down the school means that everyone will have done some and then as they specialise at A-level or GCSE they have got an option to do a greater degree of Media Studies, so that it actually is discrete. Again it is unusual to be able to have the two co-existing" (appendix 2: 699).**

Respondent CT had reflected on the considerable disarray which was surrounding the subject at the time of interviewing (1993):-

**"At the moment there is obviously a lot of debate going on about it. Initially in the National Curriculum for English there was provision for mass media and a variety of different objectives to be met through English which did include mass Media Studies. Unfortunately at the moment there**

**is a rewrite and a lot of Media Studies input has been taken out of that rewrite (appendix 2: 702).**

This respondent had criticised the lack of understanding on the part of some outside agencies of the mass media:-

**"One of the problems, I think, is that we gave in to a certain extent on the validity and the value of mass media because of the perceptions of the subject from a variety of different outside agencies who don't understand the relevance and importance and try to demean it because they think it is something that is very much a fashionable, trendy idea when in fact it is not. We need to have an agreed definition of what mass media actually is" (appendix 2: 702-703).**

CT did not see any threat in teaching Media Studies and Media Education within English:-

**"Because within English there are so many criteria that have to be met, so many demands, that I think**

**there is a place for mass media within English. But I think it needs to be seen as a subject within its own right. There are a certain set of criteria and objectives to be met and I think they ought to be met independently" (appendix 2: 703).**

Respondent DT had also reflected on the controversy surrounded the subject at the time of interviewing (1993):-

> **"It did seem very positive that they were going to add mass media into the curriculum, but then they seem to have gone back on that decision which is a shame because it is a very good teaching resource. As a subject in its own right I think there is definitely a place for it" (appendix 2: 706).**

This respondent had a strong view about the independence of the subject as a discipline:-

**"I prefer to teach it as a subject in its own right. It has a lot to offer and it also has its own values,**

**especially the experiential nature of Media Studies. But I think it can be offered to a certain extent as a teaching resource within other subjects across the curriculum and that is why it is so useful. It actually fits into the whole curriculum and can be used in that way" (appendix 2: 706).**

Respondent DT had described Media Studies in terms of her teaching practice:-

> **"It is in a way like drama: there are two sides to it. You can specialise in the techniques of the media itself, or you can actually use it as a resource. In those two distinct terms, you need to clarify when you begin what you are actually doing in mass media" (appendix 2: 706).**

Respondent ET had boldly launched a fierce attack on the National curriculum which in her view had a negative influence on Media Studies (at the time of interviewing, 1993):-

**"Because the Government of this country wants to eradicate Media Studies because if you educate people in Media Studies, if you educate them to be able to read newspapers with discrimination, to be able to watch the television with discrimination, to be able to listen to the radio, then that goes against everything that they want. They want to keep a large number of the population ignorant of what is going on in the country and as far as news and media is concerned, I think the National Curriculum will try and cut out Media Studies" (appendix 2: 710).**

This respondent believed that teaching Media Studies and Media Education within English can enhance the students' understanding of English:-

**"The level I've been teaching it is, which is just to the lower school and not for examinations, I like teaching it within English because it overlaps with the oral, speaking, component of English. It also helps them to appreciate different creative products**

**that come within the range of English language and English literature. For a sort of preliminary level, I think it is suited to be taught within English, but then at GCSE and A-level, I think it needs time on the timetable" (appendix 2: 710).**

### 7.3.2.1 Analytical Comment

Respondent AT's criticism of the domination of certain forms of knowledge and of assessment in Media Studies can be related to the criticisms of the Progressive Movement in English education at an earlier period. His account can be linked to the legacy of the Progressive Movement pioneered mainly by an English literature specialist, Holmes.

Holmes emphasised in 1911 what this respondent was emphasising in his criticisms of Media Studies. Both were showing opposition to the deprivation of children and young people of their legitimate right to self expression whether in relation to English in Holmes' time or television viewing eight decades later. Holmes (1911) expressed the issue well:-

> **"For a third of a century, from 1862-95, self expression on the part of the child may be said to have been formally prohibited by all who were responsible for the elementary education of the children of England, and also to have been prohibited de facto by all the unformulated conditions under which the elementary school was conducted" (quoted in Abbs, 1982: 10).**

Masterman and Mariet (1994) were also concerned with the subject across the curriculum. They pointed out that Media Education in its general and integrative style can be taught within English, History, Science, and Geography. There has been a considerable consensus about this point among all respondents in this thesis.

## 7.3.2.2 Classroom practice

Respondent AT supported the views of Buckingham that certain forms of theory and certain forms of assessment had been too dominant in Media Studies, as has largely been debated in chapters 2 and 5 respectively:-

**"Yes, totally agree. I think that the hidden agenda is in the examination syllabuses as well. The kind of questions that students are asked in examinations are a disservice to what goes on in Media Studies classrooms. It's the same old seventies debates about powerful media, passive audiences, institutions. I would definitely say that was true. With practical work, the hidden assessment criteria is that if the student is able to display modernist techniques to the film or video or newspaper, then they have learned something. If they simply reproduce what the media do, then they don't know anything. I think that is wrong. Even the act of reproduction shows very finely tuned knowledge of codes and conventions, for example. To expect them to produce modernist texts is a very middle class way of assessing people. It is a culturally loaded way of assessing students. If Media Studies is meant to be an egalitarian pedagogy, then I'm afraid at the moment the forms of assessment we've got basically reflect a hidden agenda which doesn't really reward**

knowledge about the media. What examinations currently reward is in fact the student's ability to write well. It's all about language. I feel that more and more when I am teaching students to pass exams, Media Studies exams, we are not really talking about the media. We are talking about how to construct sentences, how to use long words, how to use words that we know will impress the examiner. Practical work was obviously an innovation, and that was wonderful. I am still suspicious about the integration of theory and practice, and whether that actually goes on. I think that students will often produce practical work that they think the teacher wants to hear or see. I'm yet to be convinced that that is working, although it is through practical work that a student can demonstrate creative ability, innovation, or simply knowledge about something. As far as the kind of research work that goes on, students have to go away and write 3000 word essays. I think it is important that students set their own agenda for

**that. They have got to set their own topic. You can't help talking about syllabuses, because that is how students get assessed. Definitely certain forms of theory - screen theory, '70s feminist theory, have been dominant. If you follow the text books, then you'll end up with problems. You've got to evolve your own thing. You've got to decide what Media Studies means for you and what it means for the students, and their expectations" (appendix 2: 691).**

Respondent BT believed as did all respondents in this chapter and chapters 5 and 6, that the classroom is the natural milieu where the students:-

**"can bring knowledge of their own, enthusiasms of their own as well. They can improve their skills of analysis, but also learn production skills to some degree, and hopefully interlink the two things, theory and practice, which they are unlikely to get elsewhere outside the school. Unless they work in the media they are unlikely to get that experience" (appendix 2: 698).**

This respondent did not believe in the television set as a substitute for the teacher He had criticised the notion that:-

> **"kids wouldn't learn in classrooms if it's just teachers talking, so let's make it more exciting for them. Let's give them some TV programmes. I don't think that's the answer. Kids now take TV so much for granted that it's no big deal when it's wheeled into a classroom in Geography, etc. When I was at school, to have a video in a classroom was a big deal, twenty years ago. It was quite unusual. It would be an occasion. Now it is just part of the repertoire. It is used generally as a tool as much as any other" (appendix 2: 699).**

Respondent BT was a firm believer in the notion that within Media Studies the television set has a slightly different function compared to other subjects in the curriculum such as History:-

**"It can be used as a production tool, so they are actually using those tools, and also as media texts to be deconstructed, analysed, however you want to use it. It is still probably very different from how it is used in most subjects. In History or Geography etc. it is just a programme to illustrate a particular point, whereas in Media Studies the programmes are there and we are analysing them, rather than using them simply to put across some information" (appendix 2: 699).**

During classroom practice the students learn through:-

**"the theory and practice, that practically engages with things that they are interested in, the big role it has in their lives anyway. Discussion of the media enters into so much popular discourse and philosophy. I think that needs opening up and analysing, and we get pupils to do that in schools" (appendix 2: 698).**

Respondent CT had emphasised the notion that the role of the teacher in the classroom practice is:-

> **"to increase children's understanding and enjoyment of the media. By the media I mean everything including television, film, radio, photography, popular music. We look at broad areas - how media texts work, how they actually produce meanings, how institutions and the industries are actually directly related to that and how the audiences make sense of the products and technologies and the motivations that people have got" (appendix 2: 702).**

This respondent had also highlighted the notion that the role of the Media Studies' teacher is not only confined to the sphere of the classroom:-

> **"We encourage people to talk in school, to ensure that students are given the ability to discriminate**

**between good and bad examples of media (appendix 2: 703).**

Respondent CT had categorically denied the notion that students from different social classes were treated differently. At least this did not happen in her classroom:-

**"Within my own classroom I don't actually discriminate between middle class students and working class students. I just perceive them as students within the class. So I don't look at it as a way of narrowing class barriers within my own classroom situation. But I suppose it gives us a shared understanding and gives them an opportunity to look at the world outside of the classroom so they are aware of where they come from. I suppose in that way you could say it gives them an over-riding awareness of what is actually going on" (appendix 2: 704).**

This 'over - riding awareness' is the fertile soil for the cultural action which is a direct result of the theory of conscientization referred to in the last two chapters. To enable the students to be conscientized the teacher ought to:-

> **"inform students to actually retain some sort of value system and have an awareness of other people's values so that they don't become too insular. They can become single-minded about what they believe in without having an awareness of where other people are coming from. It enables students to become more aware of other people's perceptions of the world. We have had so much fun developing the subject within our own school, and the amount of response you get from kids is phenomenal because it does directly relate to their own experience and gives them a broader understanding of every aspect of their culture" (appendix 2: 704).**

Because of this, classroom practice becomes more interesting as a result of:-

**"the response we get from kids a lot of the time while they are working is that they don't see it as work. They see it as fun. They think they are not working - they are recording a programme or making a TV programme and the enjoyment factor is important. Essentially they are learning but they have a lot of fun and a lot of laughs" (appendix 2: 705).**

Enhancing the students' cultural awareness through classroom practice stems from their cultural participation and their cultural action outside the school. This enables them to become culturally conscientized:-

**"Much of the work we do is practically based, experiential work. We get out into the community as well, work with community associations, work with the local Press, work with the local TV stations, so they have got the opportunity to see how it is actually done" (appendix 2: 705).**

The cultural conscientization creates people who are capable of shaping, developing, modifying and constructing their own social reality according to the collective social reality around them:-

> **"I was just working in a little box, and you do bring your own values and judgements to it. It is refreshing to have other people to bounce ideas off and say what we think about something" (appendix 2: 705).**

Respondent DT had also implied the emphasis on enabling students to become conscientized. Subsequently and consequently they become culturally aware and become critical of the existing socio - cultural conditions to which individuals belong and from which they test and adjust and construct their own social reality:-

> **"the critical facility to understand and to cope with what they see around them, not only on TV and on the radio, but to put things into perspective in their own lives" (appendix 2: 706).**

This respondent had given an example of one but major aspect of the existing socio - cultural structures (i.e., the mass media). The cultural awareness and the cultural action as a result of her students becoming culturally conscientized had emerged in their capabilities to deconstruct what the media construct:-

**"understanding the nature of mass media, that the constructing gives the perspective, and can be used to people's own ends, and to give their own viewpoint. I think it is very much the case that people don't have that knowledge, or that critical perspective to be able to understand how media can be used. It can be used. It can be blamed, but in the end it is down to individuals to understand the mechanisms of the media. to actually understand it, or to cope with it, you have to be able to understand what is happening. to form their own judgements. They are made to. They have to filch out all the information that they actually want from it. They use it to construct meanings and put perspectives on their own lives. They use TV programmes. They empathise with characters, they see situations, and I**

**think they use those as models to form their own judgements and viewpoints, and that is obviously invaluable" (appendix 2: 707).**

Respondent ET had continued in the same way, emphasising the students' need to become conscientized, aware and critical of the wider social reality around them. This involved not to accept things on their face value. From her account it is clear that the notion of conscentization is at the heart of her teaching philosophy:-

**"students aware of what exactly the mass media is. Their first thought would be television, and only television. But radio, film industry, the advertising industry, all the media products that they come into contact with when they are out shopping, etc. - these are all facets of the media. Another facet for them to understand is how it is made and what the intentions are of the people who operate media organisations - what sort of impact they are trying to have, and why they are trying to have that impact for example in advertising agencies and television**

**adverts, and how they manipulate the way people think, so this product will sell; how much psychology goes into media products; what makes a successful media product. helps them to appreciate different creative products that come within the range of English language and English literature" (appendix 2: 710).**

## 7.3.2.3 Analytical comment

Respondent AT highlighted the interesting notion that there was an agenda in education which deprived children and students of opportunities for creative work in classroom practice. Historically, this notion had already been raised in 1943 by Reed's *Education through Art.* Reed (1943) diagnosed governmental educational negligence in England as follows:-

> **"The secret of our collective ills is to be traced in the suppression of spontaneous creative ability in the individual" (quoted in Abbs, 1982: 12).**

Respondent AT emphasised the notion that the hidden agenda of external examinations neglected practical approaches in Media Studies by focusing on

language (e.g., writing well with use of approved language). Interestingly this notion was also emphasised by Holmes. Holmes for instance condemned the external examination system in England, criticising it for:-

> **"... its tendency to arrest growth, to deaden life, to paralyse the higher faculties, to externalize what is inward, to materialize what is spiritual and to involve education in an atmosphere of unreality and self deception" (quoted in Abbs, 1982: 10).**

To elaborate further on this essential and key element of assessment, one could say that when it comes to assessment in Media Studies there usually are three main related issues to be considered (i.e., the National Curriculum in England, school policy and school management). Media Studies should enable students to embark on an active relationship with the mass media in a manner in which students analyse their products. This, among other objectives, enables the students to uncover the covert messages of the mass media. The policy of the school should guarantee the availability of Media Studies technology (e.g., video camera, vision mixer, and so on.). Obviously without the latter Media Studies becomes paralysed and handicapped. The National Curriculum should assess students according to,

among other things, their ability to produce media materials and to reproduce what media produce by developing ideas in a critical and workable manner.

The respondents had emphasised the notion that one of the major objectives in classroom practice was to enable students to become culturally conscientized, participative and critical actors within their culture and beyond the boundaries of their culture. The aim of this conscientization is to achieve socio - cultural reforms for better life. However, conscientization, as Freire (1985) beautifully put it is:-

> **"not a magical charm for revolutionaries, but a basic dimension of their reflective action. If men are not conscious bodies, capable of acting and perceiving, of knowing and re - creating, if they were not conscious of themselves and the world, the idea of conscientization would make no sense - but then, neither would the idea of revolution" (Freire, 1985: 88 - 89).**

## 7.3.2.4 Media Studies in relation to stereotypes

Stereotypes have always been centrally associated with the mass media, both in the past and at present, as images which represent a distorted picture of a certain culture, nation, an individual behaviour, and so on. These concepts have also been associated with the views which people (e.g., some parents, some teachers and some authors) hold against the media of mass communications, as being powerful and influential upon the young. Mass media themselves have also been stereotyped. As has been discussed throughout chapters 1, 2 and 3, the mass media have as early as the nineteenth century been stereotyped as having a negative influence, especially in relation to education. Respondent AT believed that teachers of Media Studies must work to overcome stereotypes of all types:-

> **"What I think is important is for the teacher not to have stereotypical versions of what the child or young person's relationship with the media might be. I think most teachers would probably have a fairly cynical view about what that means: the old stereotypes of the couch potato or the student hooked like a junkie to his computer console or the Hollywood film as popular 'entertainment/ideological polluter'. I think all of those discourses would undoubtedly surface, for**

**example, if you were to do a survey with teachers here. Why teach about soap opera? I'm sure 90% of the people would say 'To tell the students that what they are watching is a load of rubbish and really what they should be watching is something far more educationally beneficial'" (appendix 2: 686-687).**

Respondent AT defended the media which in his view had itself been stereotyped by teachers as being a source of bad influence. In this, he agreed with the views of the four respondents in Chapter 5, most notably, respondents B, C and A as well as respondents BQ and CQ in chapter 6:-

**"The critical factor is important. I think that we perhaps underestimate what students already know about the media. We tend to resort to rather simplistic stereotypes when we are characterising relationships between texts and young audiences. We are in danger of misinterpreting it. Adults making readings of children's experiences - it isn't necessarily true" (appendix 2: 687).**

Respondent AT believed that Media Studies was still limited by stereotypes from its own history. He related the current views among most teachers, about their stereotype of the media as being powerful on the young, to views from the past. He argued:-

> **"What Media Studies has lacked in the past is an interactionist perspective, insofar as it hasn't really engaged with the meaning of watching television, for example. All it assumes is that there is a kind of powerful influence on a passive, vulnerable audience" (appendix 2: 687).**

This respondent attributed the difficulty which some experienced teachers face in teaching about the mass media in the classroom to the legacy of that past. He asserted:-

> **"...Especially for experienced teachers, there would be a kind of suspicion of bringing popular forms into the classroom, a suspicion which I think needs to be eradicated" (appendix 2: 687).**

He also included advertisers, in both cinema and television, who stereotyped young people as being cynical about what they perceive on both cinema and television. This respondent criticised them by stating that:-

> **"...Advertisers say that young people are the hardest people to reach insofar as they are the most cynical about what they watch" (appendix 2: 687).**

He defended young people from being stereotyped by the advertisers and other people (e.g., teachers), by agreeing with the four respondents in Chapter 5 that young people were more media literate than many supposed. In his view, students and young people:-

> **"... are the most media literate. Their skills of making sense of television codes and conventions are well honed. They are really quite on the ball compared to older generations" (appendix 2: 687).**

Respondent BT believed that it was invalid to stereotype the mass media as a source of entertainment assuming that entertainment through the media is aimless.

He urged not to:-

**"make a set of assumptions-it's just entertainment, or it's bad for children, or it is to blame for various things" (appendix 2: 700).**

He had referred to the traditional Leavisite stereotype from which the educational authorities derive claiming that:-

**"Media Studies within English. The two things cannot co-exist" (appendix 2: 699).**

BT agreed with the somewhat realistic stereotype about the mass media as scapegoats as some writers have argued **(e.g., Root, 1986).** He elaborated:-

**"I certainly favour the view that the media are used as scapegoats. It is a convenient explanation of why people behave in particular ways or believe the things they do" (appendix 2: 699).**

He had criticised the stereotypical myth about the over - emphasising capability of the television to educate. He pointed out that this notion:-

**"comes out of a period when people thought that kids wouldn't learn in classrooms if it's just teachers talking, so let's make it more exciting for them. Let's give them some TV programmes. I don't think that's the answer" (appendix 2: 699).**

BT placed the blame on the Leavisite legacy for some teachers' persistence not to have a television set at home. He said:-

**"still follow this kind of Leavisite tradition. Some I know don't even have a TV set at home, and so they are completely unaware of it" (appendix 2: 700).**

This respondent did not want to admit that there were class divisions in English schools. He dismissed this notion as a stereotype. He had stated categorically:-

**"in their media consumption middle class kids and working class kids are the same. It would be different for their parents. There are middle class kids here who consume various media products and will say 'My parents wouldn't watch that' or 'They**

**don't like this' and so on. There doesn't seem to be a gap in terms of what they consume when they are teenagers. It may well change as they become adults and have to fit into certain social norms" (appendix 2: 700).**

He had also denied the claims that there were class differences in relation to the mass media. He maintained:-

> **"I think assumptions are made about what it is to be middle class in relation to the media. I don't think those assumptions are there for the teenagers. They come into that discourse later on. There doesn't seem to be a gap in terms of what they consume as teenagers. There are differences in terms of what they might learn from Media Studies, but I'm not sure" (appendix 2: 701).**

He had referred to his research published in an editorial Watching Media Learning (1990) in which he found that some teachers believed in stereotypes about the mass media to the extent that they did not have a television set at home:-

**"I know from the research I have done that teachers don't like to admit that they like popular TV programmes because it is a kind of loss of face. You watch documentaries and wildlife programmes etc. but to admit that you watch game shows is not acceptable" (appendix 2: 701).**

BT had ridiculed some teachers' stereotypes about children in relation to learning:-

**"When people talk to me as a Media Studies teacher in the Staff room, I think what they perceive me to be doing is introducing kids to quality films or teaching against tabloid newspapers. Teachers often assume that the teacher teaches and the children learn, but often the teacher teaches something, the children learn some things from that and reject others. It is very similar to their consumption of the media" (appendix 2: 701).**

He had referred to Thompson's (1964) stereotype that the entertainment industry destroyed every value at school. This respondent did not seem to agree with such a generalization:-

> **"Some values of the media may not be at odds with the values of education. I think it is much more complex than that kind of argument" (appendix 2: 701).**

Respondent CT had criticised the cynical views of outside agencies who tend to have dogmatic stereotypes about the mass media:-

> **"the perceptions of the subject from a variety of different outside agencies who don't understand the relevance and importance and try to demean it because they think it is something that is very much a fashionable, trendy idea when in fact it is not. We need to have an agreed definition of what mass media actually is" (appendix 2: 702-703).**

She agreed with the popular and reasonable stereotype about the mass media as being scapegoats:-

> **"I think the idea of being scapegoats is often the case" (appendix 2: 703).**

In the same way BT dismissed the stereotype about class division in English schools, CT had also endorsed the same view:-

> **"I don't actually discriminate between middle class students and working class students. I just perceive them as students within the class" (appendix 2).**

CT believed that the stereotypical images people get about American society from watching American television was a result of the overwhelming moral panic which dominatesthe judgement about the mass media:-

> **"I think one of the problems is that we get very stereotypical images of America which are not a true reflection of reality. You tend to see representations of the East Coast and the West Coast which are predominantly middle class, and**

**values which are being reiterated. I think that is a danger. We need to have a broader perception of what the real America is like. Some people do have very prototype ideas of the American person. Some of them are true but there is a lot more to America than actually meets the eye or than that which is represented on the TV or in the mass media" (appendix 2: 704-705).**

DT had referred to the popular stereotypes some people have in associating television with real life violence. She dismissed this cynical view by stating that:-

**"I think it is very easy to see something on TV or radio and think that is the cause" (appendix 2: 707).**

DT placed the blame for these stereotypes on the lack of understanding of the nature of the mass media. She said:-

**I think that a lot of misconceptions come about" (appendix 2: 708).**

DT was reflective about the presumed stereotypes of the class divisions within the school:-

**"I don't think in this school we see any major distinction between them. That has got to be something that brings together and enhances a lot of knowledge that they can use in future, bearing in mind that stereotypes are going to be there, and that is why it has to be done in a critical way, in a way that they are actually critical. When they see stereotypes they can be aware and guard against them, and not just judge by what they see"**

**(appendix 2: 708).**

She had also dismissed the 1960s stereotype by mainly Thompson (i.e., the mass media destroy school values):-

**"I don't think it can be destroyed. Cultures actually have a way of migrating to different countries by word of mouth, or in many different ways. the**

**stereotype of Coronation Street - I'm from Manchester and I know it is not like that. Yet a lot of people say, 'Oh, you're from Manchester. Do you live somewhere like Coronation Street? , the stereotypes, and the constructive nature of what they are going to see" (appendix 2: 708).**

ET believed that the stereotype about the mass media as being scapegoat was true to a point. At the same time she dismissed the notion that the Media Studies tend to narrow the gap between social classes:-

> **"Sometimes the media are used as scapegoats for the ills of society. I would say that it only does that in the way that any other subject properly taught would do it. I don't think it is a special feature of Media Studies" (appendix 2: 710).**

By the same token ET had rejected the stereotype that the American mass media destroy the educational values:-

> **"Not every value that is learned at school is destroyed by the mass media. There is a lot of**

**American culture promoted implicitly and explicitly through the mass media, but I would say that the reaction of most people in this country is very dismissive" (appendix 2: 711).**

### 7.3.2.5 Analytical comment

Respondent AT highlighted the role of Media Studies teachers at secondary schools in working to replace stereotypes with teaching about the importance and meaning of the media in their students' lives. Having been a student of the London Institute of Education, which qualified him to be a Media Studies teacher at a secondary school in London, this respondent seemed to be in full agreement with the four respondents whose accounts have been analysed throughout Chapter 5. He also derived his views about the rejection of stereotypes from his daily experience with his Media Studies students who study Media Studies as an independent subject. This question of stereotypes will be dealt with in more detail in next chapter in relation to mass media stereotypes in the West about Islam in the Middle East.

This respondent also dismissed the cynicism of most of the teachers at his school, who claimed that Media Studies is about teaching students not to watch 'a load of rubbish' on the television. In this respect he agreed with the four

respondents in Chapter 5 that Media Studies has little to do with that, as it is more concerned with enabling students to be critical about the media by reflecting on their experiences with the media mainly in the form of reproducing the media text. Respondents BQ and CQ in chapter 6 also raised this notion.

This respondent outlined the very interesting notion of 'an interactive perspective' which, in his view, Media Studies lacked in the past because it did not analyse the meaning of watching television. Consequently, this led to stereotype and cynicism about television as being powerfully influential 'on a passive, vulnerable audience.' Therefore he seemed to be in full agreement with the four respondents of Chapter 5 that young people are critical users of television and they reflect on what they watch **(see appendix 1 and appendix 2).** These two notions, critical use of television and reflection on what they watch, reinforce the fact that the young people are active and positive rather than being passive or cynical.

## 7.3.2.6 Becoming critical [1]

This central concept was emphasised by the four London higher education teachers in chapter 5, the respondents in chapter 6 and it was also emphasised by the secondary school teachers. The obvious reason behind their emphasis on this concept is that this central concept facilitates a core aim of Media Studies, which

is, among other things, enabling students to criticise what they perceive from the media and reflect on their experiences with the media. Respondent AT asserted:-

> **"If you are going to teach anybody anything, you have got to know what they are thinking about, what their reactions are, what they like, what they don't like, and why, the words they use to describe it, the discourses by which something becomes good and something becomes bad. If you are going to gain the respect of young people, it seems to me that you have got to connect with the kinds of things that they find important. Media Studies is part of that process" (appendix 2: 687).**

This respondent entirely rejected the judgmental moral strand which has been a strong motivating force behind the research into mass media since the 1920s, as has been discussed in chapter 1 by asserting that this particular position:-

> **"... which leads to all these sorts of tinpot effect theories and people putting kids into laboratories and telling them to watch violent films and hit bobo**

**dolls afterwards. That is the problem. The problem with public debate about the media - the Mary Whitehouses, the Norman Tebbits, the press, Prince Charles, all these people - they are all laden down with such a moral agenda, an agenda which is not so far away from a demand for greater censorship really. You can take that thing about Nintendo at the moment: 'Nintendo killed my son' in the Daily Express. It is really about adults not being in control over a technological form that children are able to control" (appendix 2: 688).**

The respondent has also rejected the moral position as a source of correct political responses for students:-

> **"I would never encourage my students to make a 'politically correct' response to something because they felt they ought to or because they felt it was the 'right' answer" (appendix 2: 688).**

However, he believed that students should talk about the politics of the media as part of critical awareness:-

> **"... politics of the media. I think on the whole students are very ill informed about that. I think they have got a suspicion about it, but they don't really know about the explicit connections between, for example, horizontally integrated companies, and the relationship between hardware and software. I am not a conspiracy theorist, but the control of the media by politicians and by the establishment - I am on the side of the Sun here, when they say there is an establishment plot to muzzle the press. I think that is absolutely right. That is what is going on" (appendix 2: 688).**

Respondent AT demonstrated his own critical response to the media theories he had been taught. He criticised Masterman, one of the 1970s Media Studies pioneering theorists:-

**"Masterman claims to have written a textbook for teachers but it is not really. It is really Masterman's opinions about the media. That is the problem. If you use that as a blueprint for teaching, you are going to come up with some horrendous teaching, I think. You are going to come up with 'This is what the teacher thinks. This is what you have to know. If you don't agree with me you are wrong, which I think is not what teaching is about" (appendix 2: 689).**

He also criticised the British Left for their views for not being relevant any longer:-

**"... This 70s Left position where the aim is to uncover political incorrectness and wean students off it. I think that is well out of date now, and not very relevant either" (appendix 2: 689).**

BT had linked the fate of Media Studies to the National Curriculum. At the time of interviewing there was no certainty about the subject:-

**"It just depends how much interference and how much imposition there actually is from central government" (appendix 2: 698).**

He had connected the use of television during classroom practice to enable the students to become able of deconstructing:-

> **"as a production tool, so they are actually using those tools, and also as media texts to be deconstructed, analysed. in Media Studies the programmes are there and we are analysing them, rather than using them simply to put across some information" (appendix 2: 699).**

Respondent CT had talked about her experience with her students during classroom practice. She emphasised the point that she attempted to open her students critical eyes on important details related to the mass media:-

> **"We look at broad areas-how media texts work, how they actually produce meanings, how institutions and the industries are actually directly related to**

**that and how the audiences make sense of the products and technologies and the motivations that people have got" (appendix 2: 702).**

CT had criticised the lack of understanding about the mass media by some people who tend to draw assumption and observation:-

**"there is a rewrite and a lot of Media Studies input has been taken out of that rewrite. One of the problems, I think, is that we gave in to a certain extent on the validity and the value of mass media because of the perceptions of the subject from a variety of different outside agencies who don't understand the relevance and importance and try to demean it because they think it is something that is very much a fashionable, trendy idea when in fact it is not" (appendix 2: 702).**

She had highlighted the core role of the teachers in enabling the students to be critical:-

**"to ensure that students are given the ability to discriminate between good and bad examples of media" (appendix 2: 703).**

CT had pointed out that one of the major roles of the teachers is to enable the students to be fully aware of where they come from and respect their cultural background. She also emphasised that the mass media:-

**"are an integral part of the experience of everybody and that you can never negate its actual worth to look at the world outside of the classroom so they are aware of where they come from. I suppose in that way you could say it gives them an over-riding awareness of what is actually going on" (appendix 2: 703).**

CT highlighted the point that students ought to be well informed about the mass media:-

**"to inform students to actually retain some sort of value system and have an awareness of other**

**people's values so that they don't become too insular" (appendix 2: 704).**

Respondent CT had the premise that students should be enabled to open their minds objectively on other cultures. The Media Studies teachers should:-

**"enable students to become more aware of other people's perceptions of the world. I think that the idea of threat is perhaps too strong. We get very stereotypical images of America which are not a true reflection of reality. It does directly relate to their own experience and gives them a broader understanding of every aspect of their culture" (appendix 2: 704).**

DT had emphasised the notion that students should be armed with the critical perspectives in regard to their relationship to the mass media by:-

**"teaching the media now and seeing it as it actually is, rather than reflecting on it in the future, we are giving people the critical facility to understand and**

**to cope with what they see around them, not only on TV and on the radio, but to put things into perspective in their own lives" (appendix 2: 706).**

DT had criticised the educational decision makers for neglecting the subject:-

**"they were going to add mass media into the curriculum, but then they seem to have gone back on that decision which is a shame because it is a very good teaching resource" (appendix 2: 706).**

DT highlighted the point that because Media Studies is about doing and acting in a critical manner it should be taught independently:-

**"As a subject in its own right I think there is definitely a place for it" (appendix 2: 706).**

DT believed that it was important that the students learn to critically deconstruct **what they perceive from the media:-**

**"in understanding the nature of mass media, that the constructing gives the perspective, and can be used to people's own ends, and to give their own viewpoint. I think it is very much the case that people don't have that knowledge, or that critical perspective to be able to understand how media can be used. It can be used" (appendix 2: 707).**

This respondent believed that critical guidelines given to students enable them to understand the function of the mass media:-

**"It can be blamed, but in the end it is down to individuals to understand the mechanisms of the media" (appendix 2: 707).**

DT continued her thesis that the way to teach the subject was to enable the students to be conscientized and to understand the reality of the mass media critically:-

**"it has to be done in a critical way, in a way that they are actually critical" (appendix 2: 706).**

DT had persistently emphasised the proposition that the students could be conscientized, autonomous and able to draw their own judgement about the mass media:-

> **"The students are so exposed to the mass media they have to form their own judgements. They are made to. They have to filch out all the information that they actually want from it. They use it to construct meanings and put perspectives on their own lives. They use TV programmes. They empathise with characters, they see situations, and I think they use those as models to form their own judgements and viewpoints, and that is obviously invaluable. the critical ideal" (appendix 2: 708).**

ET believed that one of the major advantages of teaching students Media Studies was that it enables them to become conscientized and independent:-

> **"enables people to be able to think for themselves more and be independent" (appendix 2: 712).**

## 7.3.2.7 Analytical comment

The respondents had highlighted the notion that they were concerned with enabling their students to be critical thinkers and conscientized, rather than becoming mechanical in their daily conduct of life. Because as Freire (1985) put it:-

> **"In mass society, ways of thinking become as standardized as ways of dressing and tastes in food. Men begin thinking and acting according to the prescriptions they receive daily from the communications media rather than in response to their dialectical relationships with the world. In mass societies, where everything is prefabricated and behaviour is almost automized, men are lost because they don't have to "risk themselves ". They do not have to think about even the smallest things; there is always some manual that says what to do in situation A or B. Rarely do men have to pause at a street corner to think which direction to follow.**

**There's always an arrow that "deproblematizes" the situation. Though street signs are not evil in themselves, and are necessary in cosmopolitan cities, they are among thousands of directional signals in a technological society that, introjected by men, hinder their capacity for critical thinking (Freire, 1985: 88).**

The respondents wanted to break with the tradition of cultural criticism in England stemming from the work of Leavis and Thompson, as represented by a text such as *Culture and Environment.* In this text Leavis and his colleague attacked mass media as agents of moral decline in British society. The respondents believed that morality ought not to be a stance from which Media Studies should be approached.

The respondent stressed the importance of students 'becoming critical', the importance of them coming to an awareness about the politics of the media and the importance of becoming conscientized. Their approach to this was well informed and sophisticated. This probably was related to the fact that they had BA and MA degrees in Media Studies. They were also teaching in the few secondary schools

in England where Media Studies is taught as a separate subject (see the sample for more information).

## 7.3.2.8 Realism

'Realism' is one of the most important and controversial concepts in discussions about the role of the mass media in a society. Important, because media are expected to show realism in their role as mirrors of the society. Controversial, because of its surrounding factors (e.g., the fact that the media are controlled by the state in varying degrees), as respondent AT and ET bitterly complained. Consequently, the 'truth' about a certain event is observed to be distorted or omitted in various ways. Those who expect realism from the media, and those who work in the media, often find themselves in complete disarray over this difficult issue. In Chapter 5, respondent A had argued that the media not only try to show reality but to construct it also. Respondent B in Chapter 5 highlighted the notion that the media are the mirrors of the society but they are distorting mirrors **(appendix 1: 667).**

In this chapter this central concept will be analysed from the viewpoint of the teacher respondents, beginning with respondent AT. Respondent AT dealt with this concept from the perspective of a writer and theorist who had influenced him

significantly, Williamson's work on film, in which she focuses on the relationships between the media, especially film and people's fears and anxieties:-

> **"Williamson said that film is interesting because it is the one public medium which actually explores our fears and anxieties in a way that television doesn't really do. Television is very superficial. Popular music does, but it is really what people do with pop music that is more interesting: organising raves or clubs, forming bands etc. But film text is really interesting because it explores our fears and anxieties, particularly horror films, the ones that politicians get most up about. They are for me the most interesting texts" (appendix 2: 690).**

Respondent AT also related his comments about media and reality to the contemporary debate about 'virtual reality':- [2]

> **"People also worry about the virtual reality debate that is going on at the moment. They are all worried about the effects on personality. The liberal**

**argument is that virtual reality will make people antisocial, asocial. They will lose their sense of perspective. I think all that is nonsense and it is just a kind of liberal guilt about pleasure. If something is good fun they must be suspicious of it. That seems to be one of the logics that runs through public debate about the media" (appendix 2: 688).**

Respondent AT elaborated his argument in favour of 'virtual reality' by arguing that most people everywhere are able to distinguish between 'real' and 'unreal', as has been mentioned in chapter 2 in relation to Cullingford's argument that children do not mix fantasy with reality. According to him five year olds realise the meaning of death:-

**"I think that people are able to make very clear judgements about whether something is real or not. Even 2-year-old kids know when they are watching cartoons. They know that when Tom and Jerry beat each other up it doesn't matter because it is not a real cat and mouse" (appendix 2: 695).**

Respondent AT asserted an interesting view that in the past it has been claimed that mass media reinforce the socio-cultural status quo. He, on the contrary, believed that they reinforce ignorance about the status quo. This view is related to realism in news coverage:-

> **"I think it reinforces ignorance about the status quo. I don't think it reinforces the status quo itself, but I think it reinforces a misinformed opinion" (appendix 2: 693).**

Respondent AT also believed that by showing 'virtual reality' on television for example (e.g., he referred particularly to the plight of the Kurds), the British public would pressurise their government to do something about it. He believed that the idea of the 'safe haven' in Iraq suggested by the Prime Minister, arose from such media produced pressure:-

> **"... or the Kurdistan thing. The public saw the images on television and there was such an outcry that the government were forced to so something. People are powerless to disagree. Even if there was massive disagreement, people wouldn't even know**

**about it because it wouldn't get reported" (appendix 2: 694).**

On issues of media realism, respondent DT supported what was the majority view of other respondents. In relation to the cultural concerns of some citizens of Qatar her view was:-

**"I don't think you should take any threat from that. The mass media is something that is constructed, and as long as you understand that, anything that comes across on it you can actually deconstruct and understand, and put your own judgement and viewpoint upon it. Another question that maybe you should be asking is 'Is the American culture going to be coming over here anyway?' Cultures actually have a way of migrating to different countries by word of mouth, or in many different ways. The mass media possibly helps to accelerate this, but perhaps this is the way that it was going to go anyway and I don't think the mass media can be blamed for that. Stereotypes obviously do come**

**across. They happen here in England" (appendix 2: 708-709).**

BT believed that because of the mass media representation of for example certain characters with certain behaviour:-

**"the media are used as scapegoats. It is a convenient explanation of why people behave in particular ways or believe the things they do" (appendix 2: 699).**

He pointed out that when children grow up they become more realistic about the surrounding reality in which they:-

**"fit into certain social norms of the collective living reality" (appendix 2: 700).**

BT believed that some people use the mass media's images as a tool of measurement to measure their images:-

**"people measure their own experience against images they might see on the media" (appendix 2: 701).**

BT had a belief that not necessarily the mass media distort educational values:-

**"Some values of the media may not be at odds with the values of education" (appendix 2: 701).**

BT believed that what teachers teach in reality is not necessarily what students learn because apparently of their own reality:-

**"What kids learn at school is not always as simple as teachers might like to think. Teachers often assume that the teacher teaches and the children learn, but often the teacher teaches something, the children learn some things from that and reject others. It is very similar to their consumption of the media" (appendix 2: 701).**

BT believed that some people's reality exaggerate about the presumed bad influence of the media. This of course is related to the moral panic theory about the media. he warned against overemphasising the:-

> **"the perceived dangers of the media" (appendix 2: 702).**

BT highlighted the notion that some teachers tend to believe that students should be protected from some aspects of the surrounding reality:-

> **"When people talk to me as a Media Studies teacher in the Staff room, I think what they perceive me to be doing is introducing kids to quality films or teaching against tabloid newspapers" (appendix 2: 701).**

CT emphasised the role of teachers in enabling the students to learn how the mass media produce images of society:-

> **"how the mass media actually produce meanings" (appendix 2: 702).**

CT denied that the mass media are the main cause of violence and other types of anti - social behaviour:-

> **"TV violence and we also see increased violence in teenagers" (appendix 2: 703).**

From respondent CT's point of view it is the role of teachers to enable their students to distinguish between reality and fantasy:-

> **"to ensure that students are given the ability to discriminate between good and bad examples of media" (appendix 2: 703).**

CT pointed out that teachers should alert their students to pay attention to their social reality:-

> **"to look at the world outside of the classroom so they are aware of where they come from" (appendix 2: 704).**

Respondent CT was clear that the mass media reflect, represent and construct. The role of teachers, she maintained is to alert the pupils to that:-

> **"in fact the mass media can do is to inform students to actually retain some sort of value system and have an awareness of other people's values so that they don't become too insular. They can become single-minded about what they believe in without having an awareness of where other people are coming from" (appendix 2: 704).**

CT pointed out that through media's representation people become familiar with other people form other cultures:-

> **"enables students to become more aware of other people's perceptions of the world" (appendix 2: 704).**

CT had referred to the mass media as a tool of distortion:-

**"which are not a true reflection of reality"**

**(appendix 2: 704).**

This respondent believed that the media cannot be relied on all the time in relation to certain images:-

**"We need to have a broader perception of what are the real phenomena" (appendix 2: 704).**

This respondents had emphasised the notion that the students at her classroom relate theory to practice through working in the community:-

**"We get out into the community as well, work with community associations, work with the local Press, work with the local TV stations, so they have got the opportunity to see how it is actually done" (appendix 2: 705).**

Respondent DT had stressed the role of teachers to enable the students to become aware of the external factors which shape their reality:-

**"one of the main and major objectives of education, I would say is to teach the students about their realistic lives within their society. This objective involves linking the school with its community" (appendix 2: 707).**

Respondent ET had highlighted the notion that it is important to connect the reality of the media to the living reality:-

> **"television, radio, film industry, the advertising industry, all the media products that they come into contact with when they are out shopping, etc. - these are all facets of the media" (appendix 2: 709).**

ET had highlighted the notion that the media can be manipulative especially in advertising:-

> **"Another facet for them to understand is how it is made and what the intentions are of the people who operate media organisations - what sort of impact they are trying to have, and why they are trying to**

**have that impact for example in advertising agencies and television adverts, and how they manipulate the way people think, so this product will sell; how much psychology goes into media products; what makes a successful media product" (appendix 2: 709-710).**

This respondent had criticised the controlled media for hiding the truth from the public:-

> **"They want to keep a large number of the population ignorant of what is going on in the country and as far as news and media is concerned" (appendix 2: 710).**

Having said that this respondent believed that the media can be the mirrors of the society:-

> **"Sometimes the media are used as scapegoats for the ills of society. It does raise people's awareness about what is going on in societies and how societies are run" (appendix 2: 710).**

## 7.3.2.9 Analytical comment

The respondents had highlighted the notion that American Hollywood's styles of films represent 'illusionism'. They referred to war films in which American soldiers, for example, are usually shown as victorious in Vietnam. They discussed some of Williamson's work on film. They referred to her 'Screen Education' articles of 1981 and 1985, 'how does girl number twenty understand ideology?' and 'Is there anyone here from a classroom?'. The respondents had entirely agreed with her assertion that such films (e.g., horror and violence), make people fearful.

Respondent AT did mention the real tragedy shown on television in Britain in relation to the Kurds in Iraq by stating that this realism is important because it did influence the public to press their government to do something. The respondents had entirely disagreed with the view that realism either in its fictional or real forms makes people anti-social. They noted *The Times* articles which claimed that because of a social and moral panic from growing public concerns about realism (e.g., violence in real life and violence of films), such realism was to be censored by the BBC and the commercial television companies in a new code. The respondents seem to be influenced by Halloran's notion that the mass media, most notably television spreads a notion of fear among people. Respondent A in

chapter 5 has also mentioned Halloran's notion that television spreads the notion of fear among people. The researcher of this work totally agrees with this view. Reporting real violence in the news coverage seems to create feelings of insecurity and lack of safety. At the time of writing the British television reported in full and sad detail, night after night, the brutal killing of Palmer, the three year old child. She was abducted after she crossed the road to buy an ice cream from a van, thirty yards from her home. Many people raised the inevitable question 'if one does not feel safety in his/her home, or in his/her neighbourhood, where on earth can he/she find it?'. If the television had not reported this horrendous incident, would the people have felt that way?. realism, as a central point of discussion about the actual function of the mass media, especially television in contemporary society has, since the rise of cinema, been associated with the rather vague notion that the mass media are presumed to be 'mirrors of the society'. Reporting the above mentioned event reinforces the 'mirrors' theory. Historically mass media, particularly in regard to the debate about realism, have been facing up to a big dilemma. If the media (e.g. television) shows real violence, killing and so on some media writers such as Halloran of the Centre for Mass Communication Research at Leicester and respondent A in Chapter 5 criticise this kind of realism for creating a climate of fear among people **(appendix 1: 649).** If the media shows half the truth of a certain real violent event, some media writers such as Respondent B in

Chapter 5 and the respondents in this chapter imply that the media are 'distorting mirrors'.

This old-new dilemma about realism puts the media, most notably television programme makers, in an awkward position where they don't know where to draw the line. According to *The Times,* July 23, 1993, both real and fictional violence, broadcast in excess, can be accused of 'desensitising' viewers. Such a verdict has of course, both in the past and at present, been based on moral panic. This view has been rejected by this respondent and the respondents in Chapter 5, who have warned about evaluating the mass media in terms of social panic responses. *The Times* publication **(see Appendix 3: 713-718)** is very interesting because, in the view of this writer, it brings back the eighteenth century arguments about the role of the mass media.

In order to complete this discussion about realism or the lack of it in the media, the following example seems relevant. A decade ago Watson and Hill (1984) wrote about the moral panic from parents, psychologists, teachers and others, both in the United Kingdom and the other side of the Atlantic, about the supposed bad effects of the media. There is a contemporary view which implies that **(see The Times, July, 23, 1993)** media could be somehow divorced from the social, political and cultural environment which produces them. The latter analogy,

'divorce', refers to a lack of realism in the media. Moreover, this perceived lack of realism or viewing realism on the television has also been looked into by *The Times* (July 23, 1993) in an article entitled 'Telly without the vision' **(see Appendix 3: 713-718).** Interestingly enough, *The Times* linked television viewing of 'sadistic violence', as one facet of realism on television, that has been watched recently about situations in Bosnia, Somalia and Iraq, with the British middle class's diversion from television to other activities.

In their 1970s influential publication *Demonstrations and Communications: a case study* Halloran, Murdock and Elliott criticised the British media, (i.e., television and the press), for distorting the truth during the 1968 students' anti-Vietnam demonstration. The British media, according to the authors, focused on the notion that the students were violent, although the demonstration had a peaceful nature. Realism on television was also observed to be a casualty during the media coverage of the 1984 coal dispute, in which the British media consistently highlighted the notion that miners were Marxists. This lack of realism and balance in the British media has been and is still manifested mainly by distortion and omission. According to Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen (1987) this aspect of British media has only come under critical examination since the 1960s when,

**"the degree of institutional autonomy enjoyed by British universities in the 1960s enabled a more critical, sometimes Marxist influenced, sociological tradition to emerge".(Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 12).**

The issues raised by the respondents echo those raised in an earlier period by the pioneers of the Progressive Movement in English literature, **(e.g., Holmes, Cook and Tomkinson),** who were influential between 1910-1925. According to Abbs:-

> **"...the strength of the Progressive Movement was to emphasise the power of creativity in education, to recognise the place of feeling and of imagination, to perceive the value of psychic wholeness." (Abbs, 1982: 10).**

It can be argued that these are the principles in education which Media Studies does deliver to students at secondary schools in England and Wales. Media Studies teaches about the media which are dominating factors in students' culture. Media for most people constitutes the bulk of 'culture', as the respondents had argued. One could say that to a great extent every person in contemporary society

is bound to be a product of the media. For most students, reacting to the different media of mass communication, most notably television, pop music, video films and cinema, helps to activate the imagination as the Progressive Movement pioneers wished. If we take the notion that education ought to 'recognise the place of feeling and of imagination' and relate this important notion to education today, it could be argued that the British government ought to promote rather than halt Media Studies within the National Curriculum. As the respondents had argued, teaching Media Studies to students in secondary schools enables them, among other issues, **"to put things into perspective in their own lives" (appendix 2: 706).** Seventy-two years earlier in the century Tomkinson, in his book *Teaching of English: a new approach,* referred to reading as 'creative art'. To use the same assertion, one may say that learning about the media at school in modern times ought to be looked at by the educational authorities as a 'creative art' which plays a key role in contemporary culture. If a poet in the time of the Progressive ideology could be said to express and extend his own culture, the same could be said about the Media Studies teachers and students. The Progressives held to be very important:-

**"... the deep springs from which authentic art, whether in English or music, drama or art, derives. The life of impulse was central to the Progressives**

**and it is the key to the expressive disciplines. Without some impulse desiring expression in order to know itself, there can be no authentic Art-making" (Abbs, 1982: 10).**

These ideas have clearly been echoed by the respondents and Respondents A, B, C and D in Chapter 5 as well as Respondent BQ and CQ in Chapter 6. The notion, raised by most respondents in Chapters 5 and 6 and this respondent, is not uncommon. In return students in Media Education are to be taught to reflect and deconstruct and reconstruct. These ideas were raised in relation to English by Hourd in 1949. According to Abbs:-

**"Marjorie Hourd was the first to recognise that the insights coming from psycho-analysis had a major bearing on the way in which English could be reconstructed, the way in which children's writing could be interpreted, the way in which drama and literature worked, the way in which the English teacher could relate to the inherent ambivalences in adolescent emotion in order to make possible the education of the poetic spirit" (Abbs, 1982: 12).**

Ironically most of the latter argument, especially about Media Studies and English, is still not settled in 1993. Buckingham (1990) for instance has attempted to show that the government's argument that English and Media Studies cannot be integrated, is false:-

> **"Media Studies offers a theoretical approach to cultural production which is in many (though not all) respects more rigorous and powerful than that provided by English. If Media Studies has tended to underestimate the extent to which 'reading' the media is an active process, its emphasis on the social production of meaning is one which has much to offer English teaching" (Buckingham, 1990: 12).**

It is perhaps important to state that recent educational changes by the government in England and Wales in relation to English, have been justified as a necessary defence of classical literature against the influence of subjects such as Media Studies which are assumed to weaken the cultural capital of English. This sort of situation has been commented on by the French Sociologist, Bourdieu:-

**"The school is required to perpetuate and transmit the capital of consecrated cultural signs, that is, the culture handed down to it by the intellectual creators of the past, and to mould to a practice in accordance with the models of that culture a public assailed by conflicting, schismatic or heretical messages - for example, in our society, modern communication media. Further it is obliged to establish and define systematically the sphere of orthodox culture and the sphere of heretical culture" (Bourdieu, 1971, in Young: 178).**

Hall (1981) has widened this view to include the state-culture relation and emphasised the notion of cultural definition from the view of the British state:-

**"Of course, the British state has assumed wide responsibilities for the conditions of culture in a broader sense. Especially through its educational systems, it assumes responsibility for the definition and transmission of cultural traditions and values, for the organisation of knowledge, for the**

**distribution of what the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, calls 'cultural capital' throughout the different classes; and for the formation and qualification of intellectual strata - the guardians of cultural tradition. The state has become an active force in cultural reproduction" (Hall, 1981, in Bridges: 33).**

Despite the fact that some respondents had denied the importance of the notion of social classes in their classrooms, it may be said that this denial may arise from a wish to discourage class differences in educational opportunity. But can the class relation of mass media be denied? This raises the notion of Britain as a class society. According to Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen:-

**"Class divisions in Britain have become more nakedly transparent in the last ten years than at any time since the war. And there is an increasing recognition that the media's role in that development has not been entirely innocent. For while the 'rich and famous' pose for the lenses of the press paparazzi in Stringfellows, television camera**

**crews are attacked on picket lines and inner-city streets. The media's representations of class are in crisis, and urgently stake their claim on the educational agenda"(Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 141).**

There is perhaps another reason behind all the respondents' denial of the class relation in the classroom. There is a tradition in the British system of education which is not in favour of raising class issues in the classroom. According to Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen (1987):-

**"Outside formal sociology lessons, class is rarely an issue that is directly raised in classrooms in the British education system a significant absence, given the proliferation of educational literature, policy documents and curriculum recommendations more or less overtly concerned with the re-presentation of the curriculum to its captive working class audience. But while we can safely assume that the presence of class relations is continuously felt during most educational activities,**

**there remains the problem of how they can be sensitively approached within the classroom" (Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 42).**

The respondent had raised issues about realism which comes to the heart of the actual function of mass media. Godard (1972) has described cinema as a supposed vehicle of realism:-

**"Cinema is not the reflection of reality, but the reality of that reflection" ( quoted in Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 94).**

Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen (1987) summed up the urgency of teaching realism to students by asserting that:-

**"If we aim to enable students to assess critically the workings of the real world by our teaching about the media, then the concept of 'realism' needs to be addressed" (quoted in Alvarado, Gutch and Wollen, 1987: 94).**

Basically, when a student watches a video or a film on cinema, by studying realism in Media Education the student will be able to analyse what he/she watches, and to deconstruct and reflect on what he/she watches. This of course creates, among other abilities, a critical consumption of the media. Whether the mass media reflect or represent reality is highly controversial. The respondents agreed that the mass media do not only reflect but also construct and represent reality. The controlled media as the respondents agreed become distorting mirrors of reality, shape its representation.

## 7.3.2.10 Media Studies in relation to English and cultural background

AT began this concept with a comment about the Leavisite theory that the mass media were agents of social decline:-

> **"as they involve a cultural relativism as opposed to a 'Here's a text. It's good, enjoy it' approach that you often find in Leavisite versions of English" (appendix 2: 686).**

AT had raised a number of critical question about mass media and culture:-

> **"why do they know things? why do they have these opinions? where do they come from? who says them first? who are the people who lead us?" (appendix 2: 687).**

This respondent had a cultural perspective from which Media Studies should be approached in his view:-

> **"Cinema as a cultural vehicle is an example of experimental content" (appendix 2: 690).**

This respondent had referred to the two ways of controlling society, by the mass media and by military:-

> **"There is the old Althusserian argument that the media are part of the ideological state apparatus insofar as there are two ways of controlling society. The media perform the role of ideological control " (appendix 2: 694).**

AT had emphasised the fact that the current and the increasing innovations in mass media technology narrowed the geographical gap between cultures:-

> **"Mass communication industries are excellent at penetrating-you don't have to have a passport to get through" (appendix 2: 696).**

AT had emphasised the notion that the home is a cultural unit from which the student derives her / his intimate experience. Thus co-operation is required between school and home:-

> **"The home should be considered by the parents to be the cultural setting for informal education about the media" (appendix 2: 696).**

This respondent had sharply criticised the National Curriculum for committing cultural conspiracy:-

**"the hidden agenda is reinforcing a class based society. It is a cultural conspiracy" (appendix 2: 690-691).**

Respondent BT pointed out that his school had achieved an interesting relation between Media Studies and English:-

**"I have always done it independently, so I do prefer that. We now run a course for GCSE, where they do a joint GCSE in English and Media Studies. They are assessed separately but they are taught in an independent way. Effectively we do both things. We teach A-level Media Studies separately and previously we did CSE separately. In the Lower School we have Media Studies within English, so I think the two things can coexist. I think Media Studies should be in schools as a discrete subject, available as a discrete subject. Teaching it within English lower down the school means that everyone will have done some and then as they specialised at**

**A level or GCSE they have got an option to do a greater degree of Media Studies, so that it actually is discrete. Again it is unusual to be able to have the two co-existing" (appendix 2: 698-699).**

Respondent BT also discussed Media Studies from the interesting perspective of cultural belonging related to social class, working class etc.:-

**"A lot of the kids we teach here are middle class, so they are already quite well equipped for academic style writing. I think that in general the kind of courses we run in Media Studies would be adaptable for the full ability range, which is not always the case in, say, an English course. Certainly in other subjects it is not always the case. Whether it narrows the gap in education between middle class and working class I am not sure. I am trying to think through my experience of different kids. Within this school, working class kids who excel may well excel in Media Studies and feel that they have got something that comes from their own**

**culture, but I am not sure there is any difference in the end here. I'm not sure" (appendix 2: 700).**

Respondent BT believed that many teachers tried to create a cultural distance between themselves and their students:-

**"there are a type of teachers who do not make the effort to understand their students' popular culture of which the mass media are essential part (appendix 2: 701).**

BT had emphasised the notion that it is important for every country to get involved in representing and bolster its national cultural production:-

**"I think any culture needs its own indigenous cultural production and needs to maintain that and to fulfil the needs of its people to have stories about themselves. (appendix 2: 701).**

Respondent BT also focused on the argument that children like to learn what satisfy their cultural needs either from the teachers at school or from the mass media:-

**"Teachers ought to understand that kids are products of their own cultural background. What kids learn at school is not always as simple as teachers might like to think. Because kids usually learn what might reflect and relate to their cultural background. It is very similar to their consumption of the media. " (appendix 2: 700).**

He found in his own research published in 1990 that a large number of teachers of English had completely rejected the mass media. They had, more or less, the same views Leavis had had in 1933 and beyond that the mass media were agents for cultural decline:-

**"I think that to understand kids, to understand and have some knowledge of their culture, especially teenage culture, is quite useful as much as anything because otherwise you are in danger of not knowing what they are talking about and can misinterpret things (appendix 2: 700-701).**

CT had highlighted the notion that mass media are an important element in people's culture therefore, Media Studies should be taught independently:-

> **"I think there is a place for mass media within English. But I think it needs to be seen as a subject within its own right. There are a certain set of criteria and objectives to be met and I think they ought to be met independently" (appendix 2: 703).**

CT had highlighted the notion that teachers ought to alert their students to the cultural background they come from and to develop mutual recognition among students of each other's culture:-

> **"Objective teachers should respect the cultural background her students come from. I just perceive them as students within the class. So I don't look at it as a way of narrowing class barriers within my own classroom situation. It is important to enable them to be aware of the culture they come from" (appendix 2: 704).**

Respondent DT clarified her view of the main aims of teaching mass Media Studies in secondary schools in England and Wales:-

> **"The first aim must be to give pupils some general understanding of the mass media. But I try to relate it to an extent to the way in which literature has been taught for many, many years. Literature has always been seen as the cream of popular culture. Mass media is actually the culture as it is happening - the present-time culture, from which in the future we will take what we see as our literature. By teaching it now and seeing it as it actually is, rather than reflecting on it in the future, we are giving people the critical facility to understand and to cope with what they see around them, not only on television and on the radio, but to put things into perspective in their own lives" (appendix 2: 706).**

This respondent believed that Media Studies as a subject should be taught at school in its own right. She asserted:-

**"I prefer to teach it as a subject in its own right. It has a lot to offer and it also has its own values, especially the experiential nature of Media Studies. But I think it can be offered to a certain extent as a teaching resource within other subjects across the curriculum and that is why it is so useful. It actually fits into the whole curriculum and can be used in that way. It is in a way like drama: there are two sides to it. You can specialise in the techniques of the media itself, or you can actually use it as a resource. In those two distinct terms, you need to clarify when you begin what you are actually doing in mass media" (appendix 2: 706).**

DT dismissed, like most respondents, the notion that Media Studies would help to narrow the presumed cultural gap between middle class students and working class students. She focused rather on the view that Media Studies attempts to enable students to be well informed about the role of the mass media and about the whole social and cultural life around them:-

**"Again, I don't distinguish, and I don't think in this school we see any major distinction between them (i.e., middle class and working class students). But I do think that the whole idea of the experiential nature of Media Studies allows people to actually understand and respect where every body comes from. Because Media Studies is about popular culture in which all people let alone students, are equal members " (appendix 2: 708).**

This respondent reinforced what Chapter 5's respondents had asserted in respect of the cultural importance of the mass media in people's life and in people's education. She had suggested that education, in its general contexts through television cannot:-

**"ever be over-stated. In their lives everybody experiences the media. There are so many ways in which messages are getting to us - in the car, when you go shopping, everywhere you go nowadays you are experiencing some form of media, even when you sit on the bus watching the posters as you go by**

**(which is quite a hobby of mine). It cannot be over-stated because it is so much a part of our lives that we really need to be aware of it and to be able to use it. It is such a wonderful resource as well that to not use it would be silly. It is changing all the time. It doesn't stand still, and we shouldn't stand still and just see it as a resource that is being used, and that's it" (appendix 2: 707).**

DT agreed with other respondents that Media Education was important in enabling the students to realise that there was no causative relationship between the mass media and the claimed cultural decline as the moral panic approaches argued. DT had maintained that it was naive:-

**"to suggest that watching films of anti-social behaviour is the cause for cultural decline (appendix 2: 707).**

ET had dismissed the notion that Media Studies has a special cultural feature in narrowing the cultural gap between social classes as some writers had suggested in the past **(e.g., Tucker, 1960):-**

**"Media Studies has no magical solutions. However it alerts students to show concern to their cultures" (appendix 2: 711).**

ET placed Media Education within its cultural partner (i.e., English) because ET believed that it would enable the students to understand the old text in the context of the media text. Therefore, this respondent prefers to teach Media Studies:-

**"within English because it overlaps with the oral, speaking, component of English. It also helps them to appreciate different creative products that come within the range of English language and English literature. For a sort of preliminary level, I think it is suited to be taught within English, but then at GCSE and A-level, I think it needs time on the timetable" (appendix 2: 710).**

## 7.3.2.11 Analytical comment

The Respondents concentrated their discussion upon the relations of media, English and cultural background. They believed that the supposed conflict with literature scholars of the past **(e.g., Leavis and Richards),** is not substantial. They were in full agreement with the position argued by Buckingham (1990) that integration between Media Studies and English is quite possible. The Respondents were also in full agreement with Respondent B in regard to the fact that students are not merely recipients of their teachers' knowledge as the Left's teachers seem to suppose **(e.g., Masterman).** They have also shared respondent A's view in Chapter 5, who believed that Media Education and Media Studies helped students in their learning of English. Respondent BT's focus on television was probably related to research he personally conducted and published in *Watching Media Learning* edited by Buckingham (1990) entitled 'How do teachers and students talk about television?', in which he started his study with two quotations from a 12-year-old girl:-

> **"At times it seems that the entire culture revolves around the images and sounds that emanate from the television screen and that all talk is somehow television talk." and "They (parents) think that television takes over people's lives" (quoted in Buckingham, (1990: 60).**

However, according to *The Guardian* **(July 20, 1993)** a research study by the Henley Centre has suggested that television in Britain could be losing its cultural dominance to the printed word. **(see appendix 3: 713-718).** The respondents confirmed the assertions made by higher education teachers reported in Chapter 5 about the necessity for teachers across the curriculum to realise and respond to their students' tastes in media. Two decades ago Murdock and Phelps (1973) found a cultural gap between teachers and their students in British secondary schools. Accordingly they emphasised the importance of media knowledge for fulfilling successful teaching. The 1960s liberal educational pioneers, notably Thompson, also stressed this necessity as a sign of a liberal education.

Respondent D in chapter 5 has also praised the 1960's integration between Media Studies and other subjects, as a signal of the 1960's liberal education.

The Respondents made the important point that evaluation of American cultural media should be isolated from American political imperialism and American economic imperialism. In the Middle East (e.g., Egypt, Algeria, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan etc.) many people are observed to reject media imperialism because of American political and economic imperialism. The latter will be dealt with in detail in the next chapter. The respondents have also emphasised the

notion that television ought to be used in the classroom as a tool of cultural production rather than simply as a passive medium. They highlighted the notion that students can use television to deconstruct and analyse television texts. By emphasising this crucial notion the respondents reinforced the idea of the creative role of students in learning on the one hand, and their capability of dealing with television as critical users of the media.

The respondents' notion about the level of education and the perception of the mass media was expressed by Schramm, Lyle and Park nearly three decades ago. They argued that it seems that there is a link between the educational level of the parents and their concern about their children watching television. Those who have been to college are more worried about their children watching television violence, for example, than those who have not. Middle-class families are more concerned about cutting down on television violence than working-class parents **(Schramm, Lyle & Park, 1961: 55).** This is, to a great extent, the case in Britain **(see appendix 3: 713-718).**

The respondents' view on deconstruction was perhaps influenced by Belsey's influential book *Critical Practice* which she wrote in 1980. Belsey did not accept the notion of 'common sense' as appropriate for the study of literature. This was because it ignored the importance of ideology.

The respondents emphasised that the creative relationship between the student and the media arose in the process of deconstruction. Belsey (1980) has drawn attention to the notion that language and other forms of literature are all ideological. It is therefore, important that they are dealt with through the process of 'deconstruction' **(Belsey, 1980: 104).**

This century had witnessed the call for cultural resistance. The mass media were claimed to be the 'culture of the machine'. They were also claimed to be the debased anti - cultural values of the advertising industry and encouraging materialistic values **(cf. Richards, 1924; Leavis, 1933; Cantril, 1940; Halloran, 1963; Thompson 1964; Howitt, 1982; Glover 1984).**

The respondents also emphasised the role of the home and parents in relation to Media Education , a theme which has also emerged from the rest of the respondents in this work. This notion in Media Education has recently been highlighted by Masterman and Mariet (1994). They have stated that:-

**"parental understanding and support is vital to the successful development of Media Education , and many media teachers regard the forging and**

**strengthening of links with parents as one of their most important priorities. It is important for media teachers to open up lines of communication with parents as early as possible, preferably even before any teaching has begun, in order to explain precisely what they hope to achieve, to describe the kinds of activity that students will engage in, and to explore the active role that parents themselves might play in the Media Education of their children (Masterman and Mariet, 1994: 69).**

## 7.3.2.12 Media Education and technology

AT had reviewed the work of Morley, at Uxbridge University, who is working on the meaning of media technology and television and video viewing and the role of television in the family. Respondent AT pointed out Morley's research into:-

**"Gender technology, how the distribution of technology around the house is gendered. And the way families control children's use of technology. is a very asocial model of learning. 'Nintendo killed**

**my son' in the Daily Express. It is really about adults not being in control over a technological form that children are able to control" (appendix 2: 688).**

AT had emphasised the notion that the technology of television and video has been misunderstood in classroom practice. He pointed out that this technology has to be used by the teacher rather than on its own and has to be used to the extent that it does not make people mechanical but conscientized utilizers. Respondent AT therefore, emphasised the social aspect of education within the classroom when:-

**"people are talking to each other" (appendix 2: 692).**

The technology of mass media's production can manipulate people for profit, as AT pointed out:-

**"They create demand for products, for example, through advertising, or they create demand for a new record or a new film" (appendix 2: 687).**

AT had emphasised the notion that mass media's technology penetrated cultural boundaries:-

> **"Mass communication industries are excellent at penetrating - you don't have to have a passport to get through" (appendix 2: 696).**

AT believed that it is important to teach students both theoretical and practical aspects of the mass media:-

> **"how to use a camera.as a vocational thing. You tell them that communications industries are expanding, satellite television beams all round the world, people need to be multi-skilled, and there is a massive need for skilled journalists, camera operators, writers, etc. So you give it a whole vocational edge. Then when you have got the children in the classroom, you start talking about censorship, propaganda, representation, the interesting things. Operating a camera isn't interesting in itself" (appendix 2: 696).**

BT believed that the availability of media technology in the classroom practice enables the students to be creative:-

> **"They can improve their skills of analysis, but also learn production skills to some degree, and hopefully interlink the two things, theory and practice which they are unlikely to get elsewhere outside the school Unless they work in the media they are unlikely to get that experience"(appendix 2: 698).**

BT had criticised some teachers for imposing a kind of technological isolation upon them selves:-

> **"Some I know don't even have a TV set at home, and so they are completely unaware of it" (appendix 2: 700).**

Respondent CT pointed out that she was concerned with teaching students:-

**"... how the audience make sense of the products and the technologies ... how media texts work ... how they produce meanings ... " (appendix 2: 702).**

DT argued that it is vitally important to engage the students in dealing with the media technology so it becomes part of their life. Her emphasis and the rest of the respondents' emphasis on 'understanding the mechanisms of the media technology' is interesting. For it refers to the critical use of the technology so students do not replace their common-sense as will be discussed later in more detail:-

**"students can specialise in the techniques of the media ... To understand the mechanisms of the media ... We experience some forms of media technology ... Media technology keeps changing all the time ... The mass media through its massive and changing technologies possibly helps to accelerate this notion of global cultural migration" (appendix 2: 708-709).**

ET had in the same vein, highlighted the importance of media technology in the students' life:-

> **"television, radio, film industry, the advertising industry, all the media technology and products that they come into contact with when they are out shopping, etc. - these are all facets of the media" (appendix 2: 709).**

Respondent ET related media technology to issues of unemployment and self - esteem in Britain:-

> **"Sometimes the media are used as scapegoats for the ills of society-you know, the idea that people who have very little money in families where someone is unemployed and receiving benefits will still want the products of the people who live in the house next door who can earn the money to buy those products. They think that they must have a television and a video in order for their self-esteem to be promoted" (Appendix 2: 710).**

## 7.3.2.13 Analytical comment

Respondent ET was the only teacher to raise the important question of technology in relation to the concept of 'unemployment' and how it relates to media advertising and to the self-esteem of the viewers. Unfortunately she did not elaborate upon these relationships but it may be noted that unemployment levels are high in the North-East region of Britain and there is also a rising crime rate.

Much of this crime in the North-East involves direct attacks upon shops selling consumer goods which are constantly advertised on television. There is obviously a need for more research to investigate possible links between unemployment, relative poverty and the crime rate but the difficult issue to study would be 'does television advertising of consumer goods provoke such crime in those circumstances?' The respondents were apparently, influenced by Morley's two remarkable studies, *Family Television* (1986) in which he focused on the role British television plays among the families in the United Kingdom and his study (1980) 'The Nation-wide Audience' in which he examined the relationship between the British television and the Black students in Britain.

Morley (1986) points out that since women operate other types of machinery in the home, their ability to operate a video or remote control cannot be doubted **(Morley, 1986: 159).** He found that social definition in the home decides who holds the power of watching what. If the woman is the employed adult, the man is likely to allow her more power over the television (e.g., use of the remote control).

This suggests a link between employment and power and subsequently control of the television **(Morley, 1986: 148).** Morley also found that men actively view the television more than women. Although women view more hours than men, they enjoy and select fewer programmes. Using Himmelweit's words, whose work has been discussed in chapter 1, it could be said that women **"consume"** television more than they **"actively enjoy" it (Himmelweit and Swift, 1976: 153).** Women often feel guilty when they watch television because of their domestic responsibilities.

Morley also found that the home has become a place of leisure because of television and video, etc. **(Morley, 1986: 147).** Gray discovered in a study on women's viewing and the use of video, more or less the same findings **(quoted in Morley, 1986: 147).** Both Brunsdon and Morley found that men generally impose their male power in the domestic sphere, even where television is concerned **(quoted in Morley, 1986: 148).** Morley further points out that the use of the

remote control by the man of the house is a sign of power, because the remote control represents giving the orders. Brunsdon found that in the absence of the father, the son behaves in the same mode **(quoted in Morley, 1986: 148).** Morley reports that men tend to view in silence while women have to interrupt viewing with domestic duties and prefer to discuss what they are watching. Morley found that men usually check through the paper or the teletext about what is on the television. Women often know the schedule of the programmes they prefer, so don't plan what they want to watch in the same way. According to Morley's study, men prefer factual programmes. These reduce feelings of guilt that:-

> **"watching television at all is second-best**
>
> **to real leisure activity" (quoted in Morley, 1986: 165).**

In fact, Collett, an Oxford University Psychologist, found (1986) that the television set was not actively viewed for a great deal of the time it was on (quoted in Root, 1986: 26).

This experimental study was based on video recordings obtained by placing a camera, microphone and timing device in a cabinet with a television in twenty families' living rooms. He left these cabinets in each home for a week. The subsequent films enabled him to discover what people actually did while the

television set was on. He found that they were often busily engaged in other activities, such as reading, eating, knitting **(quoted in Root, 1986: 26).** These findings are in contrast to the findings of an empirical study carried out in the USA in 1951 by Maccoby, who examined the relationship between the quality of family interaction and the presence of television sets in the home. Maccoby stated that the set seemed to dominate family life. She found that:-

> **"the television atmosphere in most households is one of quiet absorption on the part of family members who are present" (Maccoby, 1951: 421-444).**

Twenty-five years later, Rosenblatt and Cunningham (1976), suggested in another similar study that television-watching may function as a family coping mechanism and a means of avoiding tense interaction, especially in crowded homes where conflict avoidance through spatial separation is impossible. Television, they feel, may help to keep some families together by keeping them apart **(quoted in Csikszentmihalyi, 1981: 318).**

In his 1980 study, previously mentioned, Morley examined the reaction of various groups, such as union members, to the 'Nation-wide' programme. He found that Black students did not relate at all to the daily 'Nation-wide' television programme, and that social class and racial origin do not lead to correlations in

**"particular discourse positions" (Morley, 1980: 134-137).** He describes their initial response to 'Nation-wide' as:-

> **a critique of silence, rather than an oppositional reading ... In a sense they fail, or refuse, to engage with the discourse of the programme enough to reconstruct or redefine it (Morley, 1980: 142-3).**

It must be noted that Morley believes that it is the difference in culture and **"discursive forms"** and feelings of rejection and exclusion which lead to the results above - not the fact that individuals were black **(Morley, 1980: 143).** He claims to show that the viability of an approach which treats the audience as a set of cultural groupings rather than as a mass of individuals or as a set of rigid socio-demographic categories **(Morley, 1980: 163).**

On media technology, there has been an important article written in 1990 by Porter and Bennett in *Media Education Journal*. Porter and Bennett asserted that:-

> **"... as to the nature of technologies of Media Education , the National Curriculum has a rather**

**foggy notion of what technology actually is"(Porter and Bennett, 1990: 173-176).**

Porter and Bennett argue that:-

**"... technology is a creative process, which should be sensitive and responsive to aesthetic, environmental and cultural factors" (Porter and Bennett, 1990: 173-176).**

Many respondents, including the respondents in this chapter, had criticised the limited Media Education technology available in schools and called for more availability and more use of them by the students. These ideas are supported by Porter and Bennett. They argued that:-

**"If technology is a creative and integrative curriculum area it would suggest that technology education should enable students to:-**

*** Be aware of and make full use of available technology.**

*** Develop a critical understanding of technology.**

This point was also raised by respondent B in Chapter 5 about enabling students to be critical users of the media and enabling them to be critical producers of the media. **(See appendix 1: 663).**

*** Make decisions of a personal, community or national character based on this understanding.**

*** Appreciate the process by which technological artefacts and systems are made including the improvement and extension of existing artefacts and systems.**

*** Use imagination and creativity to design and make technological artefacts and systems" (Porter and Bennett, 1990: 173-176).**

The respondents seemed also to express almost the same concerns raised by AQ and CQ in chapter 6. They also emphasised the crucial importance of using media technology in teaching Media Studies. Respondent B, in chapter 5, highlighted the notion that the aspect of media technology enables the students to be critical producers of the media texts in order to become conscientized. Respondent C, also focused on this notion, criticising the British government for not doing enough. As discussed in detail throughout chapter 2 Masterman (1985) pointed out that the students ought to be able to be in contact with the increasing development in media and information technology. However, Freire (1985) had urged citizens in mass societies not to overuse technology in its wider utility at the cost of weakening the precious 'good - sense'. In his view, it is important to take conscientization and the critical utility of technology to prevent human beings from becoming mechanical. He elaborated:-

> **"Technology thus ceases to be perceived by men as one of the greatest expressions of their creative power and becomes instead a species of new divinity to which they create a cult of worship. Efficiency ceases to be identified with the power men have to think, to imagine, to risk themselves in creation, and rather comes to mean carrying out orders from**

above precisely and punctually. Let it be clear, however, that technological development must be one of the concerns of the revolutionary project. It would be simplistic to attribute responsibility for these deviations to technology in itself. This would be another kind of irritation, that of conceiving of technology as a demonic entity, above and opposed to men. Critically viewed, technology is nothing more nor less than a natural phase of the creative process that engaged man from the moment he forged his first tool and began to transform the world for its humanization. Considering that technology is not only necessary but also part of man's natural development, the question facing revolutionaries is how to avoid technology's mythical deviations. The techniques of "human relations" are not the answer, for in the final analysis they are only another way of domesticating and alienating men even further in the service of greater productivity. For this and other reasons we have expounded in the course of this essay, we insist

**on cultural action for freedom" (Freire, 1985: 88 - 89).**

## 7.3.2.14 Media imperialism

Respondent AT criticised the 'educational imperialism' imposed by the National Curriculum. In his view it contradicts an egalitarian pedagogy:-

> **"To expect the students to produce modernist texts is a very middle class way of assessing people. It is a culturally loaded way of assessing students. The forms of assessment we've got basically reflect a hidden agenda which doesn't really reward knowledge about the media. What examinations currently reward is in fact the student's ability to write well. It's all about language. I feel that more and more when I am teaching students to pass exams, Media Studies exams, we are not really talking about the media. We are talking about how to construct sentences, how to use long words, how**

**to use words that we know will impress the examiner" (appendix 2: 691).**

AT pointed out that the mass media are 'imperialistic' tools of propaganda which reinforce the ignorance people have about the status quo:-

**"I think it reinforces ignorance about the status quo. I don't think it reinforces the status quo itself, but I think it reinforces a misinformed opinion. People are powerless to disagree. Even if there was massive disagreement, people wouldn't even know about it because it wouldn't get reported. I don't think the media are controlled by politicians, but they are controlled by people with the same interests. I think they have the same interests. I am a hegemonist rather than a manipulative theorist. Two ways of controlling society: either you control it with tanks or you control it ideologically. In the Western democracies, the media perform the role of ideological control. I think there is still a lot of mileage in that. media If it contributes to the**

**lessening of control, it is probably a good thing"**

**(appendix 2: 693).**

This respondent had completely dismissed the notion that American film industry 'invades' other cultures. He referred this to the existence of moral panic:-

**"I've no worries about the so-called 'invasion' of American culture. Invasion is a loaded word, you see. Our education system is also controlled by politicians, so mass Media Studies has also had to come in saying that it is one thing, and actually doing something else" (appendix 2: 695).**

AT was concerned with enabling the students to be conscientized, critical and capable of constructing their social reality with full awareness of the attempts of the politicians to manipulate people:-

**"It has got in because it is about how to use a camera, and I don't really think that is interesting at all. It's the politics of the media that is more interesting. Central government controls every aspect of the curriculum, the finance, etc. another**

**imposed by the state. I am talking about government intervention in the curriculum" (appendix 2: 696).**

This respondent was against the current authoritarian notions of education. He was particularly concerned with the notion that students ought to be enabled to be independent participants, critical producers, conscientized and culturally aware of what is going on:-

**"Now you have got prescriptive things. In English, for example, you are meant to study certain texts, and that is it. This is a completely conservative, traditional view of the role of education. It is a worry about losing control. Obviously the government is a very authoritarian one and want to control every aspect of what goes on. I think basically the hidden agenda is reinforcing a class based society, whereby there are some people who understand what the hidden agenda is and do well out of education, and there are other people who don't. They get failed and the system carries on. People learn not to ask too many questions, and they**

**don't even know what the questions are anyway. has got to maintain its identity as a separate subject" (appendix 2: 690-691).**

BT believed that countries like The state of Qatar should produce its own indigenous cultural production and make it exportable. In his view this is a cultural, realistic and conscientized form of cultural and global co-operation. He completely rejected the views of moral panic on which judgement about American or other cultures are made:-

**"I think any culture needs its own indigenous cultural production and needs to maintain that and to fulfil the needs of its people to have stories about themselves. Much the same argument is made in Britain in the film industry in particular, and increasingly in television. There is no point in rejecting it simply because it is American and you don't like certain American values and certain ways in which Americans might behave. It is important to maintain indigenous production and to ensure that it doesn't disappear so that you look at**

**American products to dominate markets. On the other hand you should not just reject American culture" (appendix 2: 701).**

Respondent CT had emphasised the role of critical education in educating students not to reject other cultures from subjective or moral stances:-

**"people should be exposed to other cultures apart from their own. The media do this which is I think quite educating" (appendix 2: 704).**

DT had emphasised the notion that conscientized people tend to make their own judgement of the mass media as independent individuals who are capable of formulating their own reality. She had suggested to deal with American media in a critical and participative manner because all people need to know about each other:-

**"Cultures actually have a way of migrating to different countries by word of mouth, or in many different ways. The mass media possibly helps to accelerate this, but perhaps this is the way that it**

**was going to go anyway and I don't think the mass media can be blamed for that" (appendix 2: 708-709).**

ET had sharply criticised the 'imperial capitalism' which aims at manipulating people on one hand and seizing their precious earnings under false requirements and fulfilment:-

**"how they manipulate the way people think, so this product will sell ... how much psychology goes into media products; what makes a successful media product. There is a lot of American culture promoted implicitly and explicitly through the mass media, but I would say that the reaction of most people in this country is very dismissive. It is something that is laughable when things are promoted in an American style. I don't think it is a threat. It just gives another dimension to life (appendix 2: 712).**

## 7.3.2.15 Analytical Comment

The respondents had, as they did with other concepts, a common view of rejecting the moral stance from which many writers in the past and in the present derive in relation to American culture through its representation in the mass media **(cf. Thompson, Leavis, 1933; 1965; Halloran 1963, Howitt, 1982, Winn, 1977).**

The respondents were in full agreement with the theorists in chapter 5 as well as with the respondents in chapter 6 in regard to this point. The respondents had emphasised the political, educational and capitalist imperialism of Western democracies. Respondent AT had stated that the mass media in the West reinforce the ignorance people have about the status quo. The respondents in chapter 5 had also highlighted this notion. Many writers on the subject had also raised this opinion. For example McQuail (1986) had pointed out that the mass media do reinforce the status quo. Their rejection of the 'educational imperialism' of the National Curriculum was based on their notion to enable students to direct them selves in an independent and free way. This notion was at the core of their thinking because it encourages students to be conscientized and act culturally to reform certain aspects of their social setting. The respondents were also found in agreement with the respondents in chapter 5.

## 7.3.2.16 Entertainment

AT had made the point that mass media's entertainment has been misunderstood because of moral and hasty observations. In his view people should not be deprived of pleasure on a subjective basis:-

**"People also worry about pleasure - the virtual reality debate that is going on at the moment. They are all worried about the effects on personality. The liberal argument is that virtual reality will make people antisocial, asocial. They will lose their sense of perspective. I think all that is nonsense and it is just a kind of liberal guilt about pleasure. If something is good fun they must be suspicious of it. That seems to be one of the logics that runs through public debate about the media. We spend a whole term teaching pop music to our first years. They get to make videos and design promotional packs for a new band" (appendix 2: 688).**

AT pointed out that the mass media (e.g., television, comic books, pop music) are sources of learning which give people pleasure:-

> **"someone who is in touch with what is happening. There is no point in not knowing what is on television, what kids are reading, what are the popular books at the moment, what bands people are going to see, what alternative comics, cabarets" (appendix 2: 689).**

AT implied that the notion of purity has for a long time been misunderstood for moral reasons. In his view any entertainment that makes one feel good and happy is of pure value. He emphasised the entertaining role of the mass media in learning:-

> **"Publishing is another area that has been neglected a bit. Someone who is on top of it, who is on the ball, who reads a wide variety of texts that students also read and doesn't feel guilty about it, or doesn't feel embarrassed about it; someone who has got access to a good video library and is aware of what**

is on television, films. Certainly there are many beautiful things and many ugly things. I would certainly encourage students to give an honest appraisal of their aesthetic relationship with the text, to be non-judgmental, not dismissive of students' pleasures that film is interesting because it is the one public medium which actually explores our fears and anxieties in a way that television doesn't really do. Television is very superficial. Popular music does, but it is really what people do with pop music that is more interesting: organising raves or clubs, forming bands etc. But film text is really interesting because it explores our fears and anxieties, particularly horror films, the ones that politicians get most het up about. They are for me the most interesting texts. But the main aim of the media is to make a profit, I would think. It's like chewing gum: if you chew gum you must be a delinquent. It is nonsensical. I agree that media producers aim to produce pleasurable texts which people buy, so the texts become commodities

**generated for profit. I think that is definitely what is going on. That is tied up with moral arguments about the media. I think it under-theorises the relationship between text and audiences. It lacks that interactionist pedagogy that I was talking about earlier. This aspect of entertainment is not harmful because even 2 year old kids know when they are watching cartoons. They know that when Tom and Jerry beat each other up it doesn't matter because it is not a real cat and mouse. I try to make it as interesting as possible. I think pop music is probably mostly about entertainment. All mass media texts aim to be pleasurable and they aim to be bought, so they are entertaining. (appendix 2: 689).**

BT did not see any objective logic against deriving pleasure from American culture represented in the media:-

**"I think there is a sense in which there are pleasures to be gained from American culture" (appendix 2: 701).**

CT was a firm believer in the notion that the role of teachers among others to:-

> **"increase children's understanding and enjoyment of the media" (appendix 2: 702).**

CT dismissed the moral view that Media Studies:-

> **"is very much a fashionable, trendy idea when in fact it is not" (appendix 2: 703).**

CT had highlighted the notion that her students while working in the community derive pleasure, entertainment and lots of fun. In her view that this kind of process enables them to learn efficiently because they learn in autonomy, independence and freedom. This is the fertile environment of cultural action especially in the community. CT thus had emphasised the notion of conscientization because Media Education boosts this capability of becoming conscientized. In her view this can happen through working in the community which they:-

> **"see it as fun. They think they are not working - they are recording a programme or making a TV**

**programme and the enjoyment factor is important. Essentially they are learning but they have a lot of fun and a lot of laughs" (appendix 2: 705).**

DT had approached the concept of 'entertainment' from the view that it is a process of life. She believed that the mass media are not the sole source of entertainment. People, DT had implicitly pointed out that people acquire different forms of entertainment (e.g., social, electronic). The realistic form of entertainment which people usually derive from joking and telling tales by reflecting critically on events and developments could be described as the conscientization of entertainment because it tends to shape their reality with cultural awareness and critical reflection:-

**"in every day life people experience one form or another of entertainment. They reflect on media's entertainment by talking about it and criticising it. They are not merely recipients of this kind of entertainment. They become entertainers and entertained them selves by developing and reflecting on media entertainment" (appendix 2: 708).**

ET reacted to the dogmatic notion of 1964 that the entertainment industry destroys the educational values students learn at school:-

> **"the concept of 'entertainment' is very important in people's lives, never mind the students. The role of the teacher is to guide the students in order to make the concept of 'entertainment' as beneficial as possible" (appendix 2: 711).**

## 7.3.2.17 Analytical Comment

The respondents agreed with the respondents in chapters 5 and 6 about the learning objectives of the "**entertainment industry**". They had therefore, rejected Thompson's theory of 1964 about the bad influence of the mass media's entertainment on educational values. They argued for the conscientization of entertainment which is concerned with the critical reflection and cultural awareness of what is going on in the society and world - wide. They had made the point that whatever provides people with pleasure, is "**pure entertainment**". Hence they had completely dismissed the old Leavisite notion of puritanical values which is ingrained in statements such as the Spens report of 1938.

One could reflect further on the respondents' views by saying that showing an entertaining programme such as *Men Behave Badly* on British television does not aim at sheer entertainment or humour for the sake of it, but it represents a type of male who stereotypes women. It may be an reflection of what happens in the society. But it is still a source of learning. The representation of pop music by the mass media has been emphasised by Hall and Whannel, 1964 and Phelps and Murdock, 1973 as an important source of learning for young people in particular. They found that this type of entertainment contributes to their school work rather than destroying their educational values as Thompson argued in 1964. Hence these researchers had advised secondary school teachers to acknowledge this province of their students' tastes. Hall and Whannel, 1964 and Phelps and Murdock, 1973, had dealt with this aspect of the "**entertainment industry**" in Thompson's terms as an educational entertainment and the respondents agreed with this latter view.

## 7.3.2.18 Importance of the Media versus influence of the media

Respondent AT highlighted the notion that the teacher is an important social and realistic source of information. From him the students ought to acquire the social

and realistic meanings of teaching. However in his view, the television set can be important in education if it is accompanied by the teacher:-

> **"The modality of the programme is less than a real-life teacher for a start. I would say that it has to happen in tandem with something else, as part of an overall unit" (appendix 2: 691).**

AT highlighted the notion that making the home an informal setting through parents teaching their children about the mass media is vitally important source of success in Media Education.

> **"I agree that parents should discuss with their children what they watch on the television" (appendix 2: 692).**

AT believed that the students he taught were conscientized (i.e., capable of following a process of reflective and critical shaping of their social reality with cultural awareness):-

**"I think they are already selective and critical before they come into the Media Studies classroom. What we do is to make them more informed. I think there is a difference between being informed and being able to make selections and judgements" (appendix 2: 696).**

This respondent had implied that because his students were conscientized they chose their form of cultural action in reforming their learning:-

**"It probably does to a certain extent. I know that my students change a lot, for example, over the course of two years, and that their tastes change as a result of what they do on the course. They tend to take more risks in what they watch. They become more critical, I suppose, and more aware. You open the windows for them because you point out to them that there are other media than the ones they are using. For example, they all listen to Capital Radio, but when you point out that there are other kinds of radio that are much more interesting and don't**

**patronise them, they find that interesting (appendix 2: 696).**

BT had emphasised the importance of the mass media and the role they play in students' daily life. He called for more objective and empirical research into this area:-

**"First of all, it has such a big role in people's lives. Whether it has a big influence on them is another matter, but everybody is exposed to the media in some form or another for quite a big proportion of their lives, so that is important. I wouldn't completely reject the idea that the media have some influence on people's ideas, although what that influence is, is very hard to define and I would like to investigate. That would be part of Media Studies' role, to investigate that presumed influence rather than to assume that it's to blame about the perceived dangers of the media" (appendix 2: 699).**

While CT stated that the mass media have an effect, she pointed out that this aspect of the media has been overemphasised:-

> **"I think that the media do actually have an effect. I think it is an integral part of the experience of everybody and that you can never negate its actual worth. It has substantial influence on the way that everybody reacts and needs to be dealt within that way. I think that the idea of threat is perhaps too strong. Everywhere in the world should introduce Media Studies into the curriculum. I think it is a most essential part of the education of any student" (appendix 2: 704).**

DT had highlighted the notion that as long as the students deconstruct the mass media they cannot be a bad influence on them. This respondent had pointed out that the mass media provide people with guidelines which are:-

> **"important in understanding the nature of mass media. In their lives everybody experiences the media. The students are so exposed to the mass**

**media they have to form their own judgements. They are made to. They have to filch out all the information that they actually want from it. They use it to construct meanings and put perspectives on their own lives. They use TV programmes. They empathise with characters, they see situations, and I think they use those as models to form their own judgements and viewpoints, and that is obviously invaluable. I don't think you should take any threat from that" (appendix 2: 708).**

ET had connected the controlled mass media with the notion that they act as agents of social control. In her view because Media Education is about critical perspectives into the mass media and other aspects of the society, the National Curriculum has had its political influence on the subject since the National Curriculum came into existence in the 1990s. She started by questioning the motives behind the National Curriculum:-

**"what sort of impact they are trying to have, and why they are trying to have that impact for example in advertising agencies and television adverts. I**

**think it has a negative influence, because the Government of this country wants to eradicate Media Studies. What sort of influences the media try to put onto people, educated and uneducated alike. I think it enables people to be able to think for themselves more and be independent" (appendix 2: 710).**

## 7.3.2.19 Analytical Comment

The respondents had emphasised the importance of the mass media in the lives of people. This approach of looking at the media has also been shared by the respondents in chapters 5 and 6. They dismissed the moral panic theories which assumed that people are not reflective, not critical but passive recipients of the mass media. During the 1990s the mass media most notably the televised transmission technology will be even more significant than the past. According to Masterman and Mariet (1994):-

**"It will be an era of de - regulated, multi - channelled broadcasting and narrowcasting, of inter active cable systems, of television data systems, of**

**the everyday use by the majorities of people of video - cassette and disc materials, and of a general convergence of advanced media and computer technologies. Media Education has an important role (Masterman and Mariet, 1994: 80).**

On the question of influence, it is important to put it in its historical context. Since the 17th century the mass media was seen as agents of cultural decline. In the 20th century this approach was fuelled by two school of thought, Leavis (1933) in the united Kingdom and the Frankfort School pioneers in Western Europe of mass culture theories who later fled Germany a short while after Hitler came to power in 1933 **(i.e., Adorno, Horkeimer and Marcuse).** This period of protectionist approach and moral panic age ended by the late 1950s. In the 1960s the popular arts movement approached the mass media from a different angle (i.e., discrimination not against the media but within them). During the 1970s the media were dealt with as representational or symbolic systems **(cf. Murdock and McCron, 1979; Glover, 1984; Masterman and Mariet, 1994).** The respondents had stated that their intentions are to enable their students to become conscientized, which means to become capable of pursuing a critical, participative and reflective process of shaping and constructing their social reality with cultural awareness.

## 7.4 Summary and discussion

To summarise, discuss and reflect, one could say that in the course of the interview, the respondents devoted much time to emphasising the concepts they had highlighted. This could be explained, by on one hand their dedication to teaching Media Studies especially in its practical contexts, and on the other hand their total agreement with some famous writers in the field (i.e., Buckingham and Williamson). They particularly referred to Buckingham's corner stone book *Watching the Media Learning* of 1990 in which he drastically attacked the Screen theory of the 1970's. The theorists of this period underestimated, ignored and neglected the abilities of the students to deconstruct and feed back through the learning situation (see chapter 2 for Buckingham's argument).

Although some teachers do agree with Buckingham's verdict such as respondent AT and the other respondents in this chapter as well as respondents A and D in chapter 5 other teachers have their doubts about Buckingham's criticism such as respondent C in chapter 5. Respondent C holds the view that the Screen enriched the world of education in Britain despite its brief appearance.

Williamson's work has also sympathised with Buckingham against the Left's theorists of the Screen. For example in her article 'Is there anyone from a classroom?' she criticised the Left in British education:-

> **"I would suggest that what puts most people off the ideas of the Left is not their lax liberalism but the rigidity which they are propounded especially by those who do not stop to consider that their approach owes as much to patriarchal structures as to systematic left-wing thought" (Williamson, 1985: 91).**

Respondent, B in chapter 5 also attacked the naivity of the Left teachers in Britain who presume that **"students... are...helpless dupes of the media" (see Appendix 1: 663).** Similarly Root, also in her 1986 contribution to the endless debate criticised the politicians **(e.g., Miller, 1985)** for assuming that television watching leads to **'copy cat delinquency' (see chapter 2 for further comments on this point).** Roots, also agrees with all respondents in this work on the stereotype about the powerful effects of television. She insists that:-

> **"claims for the power of television become particularly exaggerated when the audience is composed of children. Partly, this is because of the way we hold the myth of childhood as a 'golden age' very dear. We are not discouraged by the fact that this ideal is a fairly recent creation. Nor is this image affected by the astuteness which many children display about the world (Roots, 1986: 11).**

The respondent highlighted the concepts (i.e., 'Media Studies in its cultural background' and 'realism'). They seemed to be in full agreement with all respondents, most notably respondent A in chapter 5 about the mass media as an important ingredient of the living culture. Having said that, further research is urgently needed into the importance, as respondent B in chapter 5 argued, of the mass media among various ethnic student groups in British schools.

As will be discussed later mainly Morley (1986) focused on this area. This would enable comparisons to be made and could give insights into the part played by culture. For instance, does a child of Pakistani origin, brought up in a Moslem home, react to the mass media in the same way as a white British child brought up

in a non-religious household? Such research might make it easier to isolate media effects from other effects.

The reason for this urgency in my view is that there is an increasing number of Asian and other ethnic groups in British schools. The respondents focused on the concept (i.e., 'Media Studies' in its different terms, discussed earlier, such as Media Studies in the context of the curricula). The interpretation for this may be that this concept has been an overriding issue between the official educational authorities and the teachers since early this century, as has been discussed in chapter 3. The debate about Media Studies has roots even before that, as mentioned in chapter 1, in relation to the claimed impact of theatre on the young.

The respondents raised the issue of 'Media Studies' in its relationship with technology. This issue is of great importance in teaching Media Studies at schools. Respondent C, in chapter 5 sharply criticised the government for the lack of media technology at schools. Masterman (1985), also urged the government to normalise media technology at school, as has been dealt with in chapter 2.

Respondent ET placed an enormous emphasis on three unique and new concepts (i.e., 'Media Studies', 'employment' and 'self-esteem'). The last two concepts have been neglected by the other respondents in this research. They are interesting concepts because the media of mass communications have certain links with these

issues, as has already been shown mainly throughout the work of Morley's 1980 ethnographic research into the relationship between watching television and the reaction of British Black students and 1986's *Family and Television.*

Respondent ET's concerns between the British family and viewing television were also expressed a year after Morley's 1986 work by *The Guardian.* On October 31st, 1987, *The Guardian* reported that researchers at Exeter University had established that the peak for the number of hours spent by boys watching television is reached at the age of eleven years. In fact, they found that eleven year old boys watch more television than any other group in British society **(The Guardian, 31/10/87: 1).** This is particularly interesting since this age-group is also identified by Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince as being the one which views most heavily, as has already been discussed in chapter 1.

Further, respondent ET's views on television perception by members of British society (e.g., children) were also aired by the BBC. A BBC committee asked the BBC's Broadcasting Research Department to commission an independent and objective study of the extent and nature of violence on television programmes, as one aspect of television **(see for example BBC, 1987)** which is claimed by some writers **(e.g., Howitt, 1982, Winn, 1977, Ferguson, 1985 etc.)** to be blamed for real violence and crime in British society. This study was carried out by

Cumberbatch of Aston University **(BBC, 1987: 9).** Cumberbatch's definition of violence was wider than that used in this work (chapter 2), it included actions against inanimate as well as animate objects and acts attempted but not necessarily achieved. He found that fewer than one third of programmes contained any violence and that the average number of violent incidents per programme was just over one. In 83% of incidents there was no bloodshed, and depiction of injuries was relatively rare (BBC, 1987: 9). This study was compared with similar studies carried out in the 1970s by researchers on both sides of the Atlantic **(e.g., Gerbner, in the United States of America, Halloran, Elliott and Murdock, 1970 and Halloran, Elliott and Murdock, 1972).** It appears that the proportion of programmes containing violence has declined and so has the frequency of violent acts. This was more true of news broadcasts than of dramatic fiction **(BBC, 1987: 9).**

Great stress must be placed on the necessity to carry out further research into the relationship between watching television and British families, as respondent ET raised the notion that the mass media, most notably television, have certain linkages with certain social phenomena in certain contexts, as has already been referred to.

Respondent A in chapter 5 has also highlighted the notion that violence on the cinema has a negative impact on British culture. She referred to American cinema **(see appendix 1: 361).** In the same vein, respondent AQ in chapter 6 shared her view. The IBA has also considered the question of family viewing. All programmes continue to be scheduled in the light of the IBA's guidelines on the portrayal of violence on television and its family viewing policy and of the requirement that, so far as possible, nothing is included which offends against good taste or decency, or is likely to incite to crime or to be offensive to public feeling **(IBA: 1987a).** Although there are many studies about television and children, there are too few studies about television and those who are no longer children but not yet adults; in other words, adolescents, who are claimed to be responsible for causing the crimes (e.g., car theft), as has been shown in chapter 2 **(cf. Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince, 1958; Halloran, 1970; Gerbner, 1972; Howitt, 1982).**

Future research should emphasise the reasons that make adolescents choose to watch violent programmes on television, since this particular aspect of television was highlighted by an early research in the United Kingdom by Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince in 1958, as has been referred to in chapter 1 and other parts of this work.

Research should include an examination of parental relationships, level of affection within the family, the level of violence at school and in other areas of the child's life, as respondent ET, Morley, 1980 and 1986 and other researchers emphasised, particularly in this chapter. It is nearly impossible to study one aspect of society in isolation, so research must look at the child's environment and society as one. Research should also focus on the relationship between the mass media and employment, the individual's self-esteem, as respondent ET suggested. Apart from a few studies into the mass media and the family carried out in the United Kingdom since the 1980's **(e.g., Morley and Brunsdon, 1979; Morley, 1980 and 1986; Collett; 1986; Gray, 1987; Brunsdon, 1986; Root, 1986),** as has been shown in this work, mass media research seems to neglect this area. This may be related to the claim that the mass media are controlled by the state, as respondents C and B in chapter 5 **(see appendix 1: 686)** and respondent AT **(see appendix 2: 506)** in this chapter revealed. The researcher associates the rise of research into the British family and the mass media in the 1980's with the rise of concern about teaching the mass media at school in the 1980's too, as has been dealt with in chapter 2. It would be useful to go into the question of why television shows programmes with violent and aggressive content. Is this because such programmes reflect violent and aggressive aspects of society or is done to attract large audiences?. The latter question has largely been dealt with by all respondents in this thesis. They all seemed to agree with the notion that the mass media do not

merely reflect, they also construct. As respondent B particularly in chapter 5 emphasised, the mass media are mirrors of the society but they are distorting mirrors **(see appendix 1: 667).** Respondent AT in this chapter raised the opinion that the mass media reinforce ignorance about the status quo **(see Appendix 2: 693).** Respondent B in chapter 5 has blamed the Screen theorists such as Masterman for reinforcing the status quo in Britain **(see appendix 1: 664).** The author of this work observes that, while that may be true, the mass media in the Third World also reinforce the status quo (e.g., in Iraq, Libya etc.). This concept of the media reflecting characteristics of society (such as violence) is also held by other writers **(cf. Westergaard, 1977, and Carter, 1971).**

There have been also a few studies carried out on the relationship between the mass media and girls within the family, a concern raised by respondent ET. This writer considers that more are called for, to determine to what degree (if at all) girls are more or less affected by the mass media, (e.g., television) than boys. Again, such research would give clearer insight into the importance of variables (such as gender) when considering the effects of (e.g., television violence). As has been discussed in chapter 1 and 2, some writers blame television violence for social crimes committed by males. They do not seem to associate violence on television with girls, nor do they link girls with causing social crimes **(e.g., Howitt, 1982).** It is important that all studies should replace the term 'effect of the

mass media' with the term 'the importance of the mass media', as all the respondents in this thesis persisted. Writers on the mass media ought to define precisely what they mean by 'violence' and 'aggression' on the television motivated by the cultural importance of the mass media as a common culture, as Williams argued in 1977, as has been mentioned in chapter 2, rather than dealing with the mass media from the approaches of moral panic and stereotypes. In his book *Mass Media and Social Problems* Howitt, for example seems (1982) to blame the social problems in the United Kingdom on the mass media, particularly television, as has already been referred to in chapter 2, without defining television violence and aggression. Research into this area should define these terms precisely. This is so that readers and those interested in the results can be sure of what is being presented. Do the terms include, for example, aggressive language, swearing, violent intent? Television is still a relatively new medium in many countries, particularly in the Third World. In such countries it should be possible to find control groups who have no access to television as Himmelweit, Oppenheim and Vince were able to do in Britain in the 1950's. See chapter 1 for more of their views). Research into the relationship between the mass media (e.g., television violence) and the family in such societies should assist in separating media effects from the effects of other variables such as culture, upbringing, predisposition, deprivation and possibly even diet, since food additives are often blamed for aggressive behaviour. As has already been agreed by all respondents the assumed

power of the mass media, most notably television, should not always be blamed for the ills of the society. For example, did the 32 year old man from Hartlepool who abducted and killed the three year old child Rosy, as has already been discussed earlier in this chapter, imitate violent and nasty films in which children are often portrayed to be brutally beaten to death tortured and ultimately killed? Was his action a violent and devious route to fame? Could his action be simply attributed to the influence exerted by violent films, or were the factors which led to the savage murder far more complex? For instance, did he suffer from a deep-rooted depression, social isolation, or frustration?. Was there a bad experience in his childhood, such as lack of affection from his parents or was he deprived of certain other things children usually need, such as love, security, friendship?

Teaching the mass media from the point of view of the respondents ought to be objective. In other words the moral panic about the mass media should be avoided, considering other factors, rather than learning about them in isolation. They also hold the view that teaching the mass media at school enables the students to reflect upon the mass media, so they do not relate the ills of the society simply to the mass media. The social crimes which are reported by the mass media are not necessarily committed by watching violence on television. There are an immense number of factors which ought to be considered (e.g., unemployment, psychological and emotional deprivation etc.), as has been

discussed in chapter 2, 5,6 and this chapter respectively. The teachers believe that learning the mass media by the students enables them to be capable of process information, deconstructing, reproducing the media text, reflecting and critically consume the mass media.

## 7.5 Generating Grounded Theory from the respondents' accounts

**The practitioners' theory can be called the theory of cultural participation, conscientization and cultural action in Media Education . This theory has two aspects. First, the theoretical cultural participation and conscientization. Second, the empirical cultural participation and conscientization. These two dimensions will be discussed below as they were grounded in the practitioners' accounts and had emerged in different but related and major themes and issues.**

**Grounded in the practitioners' critical discourses was the consistent emphasis on enabling their students to become critically involved theoretically and empirically in cultural participation and conscientization. In their view the conception of theoretical cultural participation and conscientization refers**

to the varieties of ways in which they enable their students to become critical participants in the classroom and beyond, to be alerted, aware of what is going on, equipped with the critical eye and capable of formulating their forceful, clarifying and independent views about occurrences and developments.

They believed that the notion of empirical cultural participation and conscientization refers to the way they enable their students to link their participative learning in the classroom to the wider socio - cultural conditions in which they work as participants and partners with their students within the community in which they are all participants. One major aspect of the existing socio - cultural structures is the mass media. In their view, the participative work their students do with the local press, the local radio, the local television contributes to their capabilities to construct critical remarks and alternative positions and raises their practical understanding of the internal and external pressures which feed into and derive from these industries. In their view this form of participative practice enables their students to act positively in their cultural action. Grounded in the practitioners' critical discourses was the premise that their students' abilities to become critical participatives in this way is clearly the result of conscientious and conscientized awareness and self - reflexivity.

**The practitioners believed that participation and conscientization cannot only be obtained from the classroom or the school but they can be achieved through encouraging the students to follow up events and developments as they occur world - wide. And to meditate, reflect and analyse these events and developments and participate with every means available to alleviate suffering and misery. In their view, this golden age of the 'global village' requires global and international participative personalities who extend their concern beyond the boundaries of their own intimate societies. Those who go on thinking, go on developing and changing and those who go on thinking, act promptly. Grounded in the practitioners' critical discourses was the notion that only through the conception of critical education can these notions be achieved. In their view, educational policies should embark on making this an educational reality.**

**The practitioners had centred their critical discourses on the thesis that educational policies, which derive its perspectives from the 1920s stimulus and response psychology, whose overwhelming emphasis was about the moral panic in relation to the child's welfare, have to be abandoned. They believed that the early 1970s' screen theory had strongly reinforced the assumptions of the stimulus and response theory. In their view this theory presumed that students were passive rather than active recipients on one hand and the**

teachers were the channels for the knowledge producers. They also believed that the current conventional theory of both the child - centred and the teacher - centred focus which stems from the screen theory should be also abandoned. Instead they had endorsed their conceptualization of theoretical and empirical participation and conscientization and cultural action. In their view this theory is an oppositional enterprise to reactionary positions about culture. They had referred to the urgency to get rid of the Leavisite inheritance. They believed that the students should be armed with practical criticism about their culture because it keeps their minds preoccupied, analytical and calculated. This notion, in their view, is based on approaching the connotation of culture from an objective perspective which is, they had suggested empirical - dispassionate anti generalization. Grounded in their critical discourses was the theory that the educational cultural acquisition of Media Studies and Media Education , in its universal context which is based on participative conscientized active pedagogy theory, challenges the dominance of authoritarian notions of current educational theories. They were firm endorsers of the notion that students are active participative and conscientized partners in their society and beyond. In regard to the mass media they believed that they alert their students to be culturally active participants and critical of the media's text rather than being merely consumers.

**The practitioners had highlighted and theorised the notion that this process would encourage their students to be culturally critical participative and critical producers of the media's text. This cultural participation and conscientization is a necessary prerequisite for a certain forms of cultural action they encourage their students to conduct. Grounded in the practitioners' critical discourses was both the theoretical and practical proposition to urge their students to become conscientized, aware and critical of the wider social reality around them. Not to accept what they perceive from the mass media on their face value. This cultural awareness would enable the students to act culturally in relation to, for example, the processes of deconstructing and reflecting on their students' experiences with the mass media which is a form of cultural action as a major outcome of reaching the level of cultural conscientization. The respondents were concerned that through enabling their students to become culturally conscientized and aware of what is going on around them would enable them to not only shape and construct their own social reality but also to understand the external factors from which their own social reality derives. From their accounts the notion of conscientization was at the heart of their theory and of their teaching philosophy.**

**They had clearly, applied the theory of teaching Media Studies and Media Education , as their subject discipline, constructed by the institutional theorists (i.e., participative centred teaching). They had manifested their capability in not only relating this theory to their teaching practice but also in maintaining both the theoretical and the empirical dimensions of this theory while teaching. In their view, this theory should be developed and modified within the classroom.**

**They had also emphasised the importance of other educational social settings in which they participate with their students in the empirical aspect of the subject (e.g., in the community, the press, television stations, radio stations etc.). In their view, one of the major themes emerged from their participative involvement with their students that the social practice of Media Studies outside the boundary of the school had provided simultaneous active pedagogy and integral interaction between the students and their community. They believed that this participative process, among others, gives the subject its distinctiveness by the means of reflecting on theory and applying it to its wider environment. The surrounding community represents the wider social structure to which the school as a social and cultural unit belongs. This understanding of participative teaching, in their view, stems from the democratic notion that both students and teachers come to the classroom with**

a certain body of knowledge, which should be acknowledged, discussed, added to and respected. They believed this can only happen (through the participative process of learning). This modern educational theory privileges both partners equally, as the main source of information within the classroom. Grounded in their discourses was the theory that enhancing the students' cultural awareness through classroom practice stems from their cultural participation and their cultural action outside the school. This enables them to become culturally conscientized and participative. This cultural conscientization and participation creates people who are capable of shaping, developing, modifying and constructing their own social reality according to the collective social reality around them. They had implied that the emphasis on enabling their students to become conscientized and participative, thus enables them to become culturally aware because of their participation in their culture in its wider contexts and become critical of the existing socio - cultural conditions to which individuals belong and from which they test and adjust and construct their own social reality.

They had also emphasised their opposition to the dominant claim that there is no place for Media Studies in the National Curriculum. In their view, Media Studies can be taught both within English and in its own right as an independent discipline. The practitioners also believed that they had achieved,

through their classroom practice a satisfying degree of an active participative and conscientized pedagogy and integrating relationship between English and Media Studies on one hand and between Media Studies and other subjects in the curriculum. Grounded in the practitioners' discourses was the theory that Media Education and Media Studies' practical work within the community will provide the students with critical abilities based on cultural participation and conscientization. In their view, when their students connect their theoretical conceptions of the mass media to their practical cultural work (e.g., producing their own cultural productions of media texts in their different and various forms ) this action is described as a form of cultural action in Media Education . They had persistently maintained the view that the critical, participative and conscientized ways of using mass media's technology while working on students' own empirical and practical media projects improves students' critical thinking.

Grounded in their discourses was a theory that in mass society people can become servants to instructions in relation to technology. They encourage their students to be independent and use their own internal instruction (i.e., using their common-sense). The practitioners had emphasised the theory that critical handling of media technology by the students would enable them to comprehend the fact that technology, in its general acquisition and utility, is a

civilizational innovation of the critical mind. In their view students ought to be alerted to the fact that the dramatic changes in mass media's transmission technology are bound to transform the world into even more smaller 'village'.

Grounded in their discourses was the theory that enabling the students to be critical producers of the media texts would inspire them to be critical developers of innovative mass media's technology. This process was, in their view one form of cultural action based on conscientization which they believed, must be one of the concerns of Media Education and Media Studies (i.e., the urgency to use technology with awareness rather than using it mechanically). Students should be the masters of the technology they use and not vice versa. They believed that the 'conscientization of entertainment', which is concerned with the critical reflection and cultural awareness of what is going on in the society and world - wide was the intellectual alternative for 'aimless entertainment'. Grounded in their discourses was the theory that conscientization and the critical utility of technology might prevent the human being as a conscious subject from becoming mechanical.